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*The* **H** *Magazine for the Christian Home*  
**Hearthstone**



- Christmas in Your Heart—*Marjorie King Garrison*
- As Old Codes Crack—*James Wesley Ingles*

DECEMBER, 1961 - 25c



# The *Magazine for the Christian Home* Hearthstone

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### Christmas Greetings

These Christmas words we bring to you,  
 Are sung with love, sincere and true;  
 Its message speaks of hope and cheer  
 That you may keep all through the year.

And with its song it will impart  
 A happy thought deep in your heart.

—Clyde S. Creel

**Joy at Christmas.** The article, "Toward a Happier Christmas" by Mrs. Jay W. Jones provides a look at various holiday customs of persons around the world. You will be interested in reading about the *Hanukkah*. Or, would you like to serve a Wassail Bowl? You will find the recipe on page 25.

**Busyness of the Season.** Busyness at Christmastime is the lament of most of us. When "Christmas in Your Heart" is the goal to be achieved, we need not worry excessively about the hustle of the season, counsels Marjorie King Garrison. Readers should find some consolation and a new perspective of busyness from her article.



**The Cover.** Featured on the cover is "The Blue Madonna" by Frank Wesley of India, one of the series of World Christian Art Christmas Cards published by the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27. See inside cover of October, 1961, *Hearthstone* for other Christmas cards available from the committee listed above.

**Coming Soon.** "Is Your Child Selfish?" by Elizabeth Tibbals McDowell; "Friday Fun Night for the Family" by Mary Ellen Dreier; "Respect Your Teen-agers" by Julie McDonald; and others.

Until then,

R. C.





## *Christmas* in Your Heart by Marjorie King Garrison

EACH YEAR I AM BEGUILED by articles and editorials, urging that we do not let Christmas be a busy, rushed season, but a time of peace and quiet beauty. Every year I resolve that it will be different next Christmas and that I will not still be addressing Christmas cards a few days before the event and wrapping presents and making doll clothes up to midnight on Christmas Eve. I get such a frustrated feeling, trying not to be hurried, and wonder if I should have not had a few less children or chosen a husband who didn't leave everything until the last moment if I were to have a quiet, leisurely holiday season that writers advocate.

One Christmas I suddenly rebelled. I decided that those who advocated the quiet, restful life had no small children. Anything worth achieving takes hard work, and the great accomplishments of the world are not made by those who are searching for the "balanced" life or "peace of mind" or "leisure." Any wife and mother of young children finds her daily schedule of meals, washing, ironing, cleaning, mending, sewing, teaching, and supervising a busy one. Add to her household jobs a regular contribution to the community such as teaching a Sunday church school class, working with the P.T.A., or helping with Blue Birds. If anything extra comes along, such as illness, Community Chest Drive, Red Cross, or a child's birthday party, her time becomes even more fully scheduled. How can Christmas—with church and school activities, gift selections, and entertaining—be anything but busy? Any mother who thinks life for her can be leisurely and quiet is asking for frustration and irritation. She needs to recognize that—for her—life will of necessity be busy, and she needs to feel joy in the contribution she can make to the happiness of the community and her family.

How did the idea originate that Christmas was a time of quiet and peace? As I recall it, the original Christmas was anything but restful, and not all the arrangements were the best. What woman would want to travel miles to a crowded city at the time her baby was due? How well did Mary and Joseph plan





their trip that they were unable to get a room at the inn? Other people had managed to get there in time for proper lodging. Was it a restful trip for the shepherds? They had to leave their sheep, and add a trip to their regular duties. The wise men, too, made a tremendously long journey and spent years studying the stars so that they might know when to follow the star to the Christ Child. Once Jesus was born, was Mary able to have the rest and tranquility a new mother deserves? No, for fear of Herod, they could not return home, but had to journey to Egypt.

Why then do we get an impression of peace when the original Christmas was so full of changed plans, rush, the bustle and commotion of an overcrowded town? It was because peace was in the hearts of the people concerned. They had found fulfillment in service and something bigger than themselves. Peace is an attitude of mind, not a matter of external circumstances. Constantly in Jesus' ministry crowds pressed about him when he tried to be alone; his teachings were misunderstood; and his enemies tried to trap him. Yet, throughout all the complexities of his life, his spirit was tranquil; he was poised; and his outlook on people was loving.

Is not this, then, the truth for Christmastime—a loving, tranquil spirit in the midst of a busy life—rather than a time of leisure and reflection?

As Jesus often admonished, we need the spirit of a child. Does a child think of all the work there is to be done on a celebration, and worry over what is yet undone? No. Our children enjoy the preparation for company or a party or a Blue Bird meeting or for Christmas as much as the actual event. Each moment is to be savored—making place cards, planning games, wrapping presents. Each event is treasured for its own worth. That's what we need to do at Christmastime—and all year round, for that matter—enjoy

each moment for itself. Each Christmas job is fun in itself, if we don't become oppressed by the accumulative weight of the jobs in their entirety. Cooky making, festive decorations for the house, planning services—all those jobs are some of the most delectable aspects of homemaking.

How does one get this tranquil spirit in the midst of confusion and noise and busyness? If you have children, there will be confusion, noise and bustle, as well as a deep inner joy. Each person partly must answer that for himself, for inspiration comes in different ways to different people. This one thing I know, however, in busy times no one can afford to neglect a daily "Quiet Time" or prayer or devotional reading—whatever stimulates him most.

Several years ago, Christmas, for us, was a time partly of sorrow and interrupted plans; so, we as a family, had to re-evaluate what was most important to us in the Christmas season. We had to plan for those essential things, and if there was time for more, fine; if not, no regrets. Christmas has always been an important family affair for us—all the children, in-laws, and grandchildren gather at my parents' big home. Shortly before Thanksgiving my father died suddenly of a heart attack. Each of us children suggested that we forego the big family gathering but Mother decided that Dad had planned for this Christmas and bought most of his gifts; and that we would go ahead with the plans that he so loved. Two weeks before Christmas my sister was in an accident and spent Christmas in the hospital. We still had the family gathering and took colored movies to show her. Her children were there, and found it easier to be with the rest of their relatives.

Death and injury are hard for children to understand. We had to plan our Christmas carefully if it was to be meaningful for our children. I would like to mention some of the traditions we found meaningful, for I think it is helpful for parents to compare experiences.

Our children particularly en-

joyed starting the day by reading the devotions in a Christian family magazine which gave the background of so many Christmas traditions. Also, at our evening meal we made a ceremony of lighting candles for dessert, dropping pennies in a world bank for Meals for Millions or Church World Service and singing Christmas carols. Even two-year-old Robert had his turn of choosing a song which was invariably "Jesus Loves Me."

One of the joys of Christmas time for us is hearing from friends who have been silent throughout the year. The newsy cards and photographs of the family are our favorites. Because we are always disappointed if there is no news with the card, the last four or five years we have mimeographed letters which we send to all our friends whom we don't see often. We have felt the letter worthwhile even when it was a great effort. I can remember when my husband brought me home from the hospital after Robert was born, and he solicitously asked me if I were comfortable in the car. I assured him that I felt fine and a few days of rest at Mother's would make me ready for household duties and Christmas.

"Well, if that's the case," he said, "I have the envelopes all addressed, your typewriter is set up, and the Christmas letter is written out in longhand. Would you please make a ditto before I take you to your mother's?"

For a number of years my husband's Junior A Department has gone caroling and ended up at our house for cocoa and cookies. It's astounding how much food thirty-five children can eat, but we feel this is a worthwhile experience. Our own children always enjoy making the cookies and cupcakes.

We have always felt present-giving should be a personal affair, and as soon as the children were old enough to receive allowances, they have saved money for weeks to buy presents. The year my father died, three-and-a-half-year-old Kathleen saved enough out of her five-cents weekly allowance to buy suckers, bubble gum, pencils,



and scratch pads for her cousins and aunts. As we watched the children's pride in their own contributions, we felt it was worth the time it took in supervising the shopping and wrapping. We felt fully rewarded, when Marilynne and Sharon remarked, "Until now, I never understood that saying that it's more fun to give than to receive. I can hardly wait until people open our gifts on Christmas." Their older relatives always dignify the gifts with a written thank-you. Marilynne also developed a skill in wrapping her presents which gave her real satisfaction. Toward the last, the girls decided they wanted to give the

neighbors something more than cards, and they made, with the help of David, three different kinds of cookies which they packed in little boxes.

Because they wanted to earn extra pennies for presents, the children were eager to tackle some of my jobs, and if I relaxed my housekeeping standards somewhat, I had more time for the "extras" of homemaking. Five-year-old David could do a good job of vacuuming at a penny a rug, and Kathleen got the worst of the dust off the dining room furniture.

Part of our family tradition is having a Christmas worship service before the older children go to

bed. It generally consists of the Christmas story, a few carols, a poem or a litany, and a prayer. It helps to put us in the reverent, quiet mood after all the busy preparations of the day.

Each family has its own traditions at Christmas, its bit of happy memories. Let some of the memories be of cheerful work, sacrificial giving, and of family worship together, and the heart will be joyful. In a Christmas that was tinged with sadness, we learned how much traditions can mean. And we learned at a time when nothing went according to plan that peace and joy are in our hearts, not in outward circumstances.



by Hilda E. Allen

# b

## IBLEGRAM

Guess the words defined below and write them over their numbered dashes. Then transfer each letter to the correspondingly numbered square in the pattern. The darkest squares indicate word endings.

Reading from left to right you will find that the filled pattern will contain a selected quotation from the Bible.

A Tell tales -----	13 56 25 32 109 60
B Cereal -----	16 111 78 36 48
C Hale and hearty -----	29 4 61 40 7 70 15
D She knows best -----	44 11 106 63 65 97
E Nonsense -----	77 20 67 100 50
F Was fond of -----	108 92 3 41 58
G Sweet song bird -----	62 17 47 2 74 115
H Vegetable for French fries	35 93 69 90 98 8
I Come out of the egg shell -	49 104 91 28 99
J Dog of the far north -----	33 53 86 9 85
K Gift from the sun -----	21 105 119 14 59
L Big day in July -----	83 71 72 23 76 55
M Brought under control, as lions and tigers -----	54 114 64 112 81
N Extreme scarcity of food -	66 87 1 46 118 26

O Juicy, red vegetable -----	75 82 5 73 37 80
P Toss, as a ball -----	51 38 52 96 103
Q Small; not worth mentioning -----	30 45 107 19 116 34
R What the fog signal means	24 42 57 79 6 68
S Travel as a fish travels --	39 12 102 84
T Any very special occasion -	101 89 31 10 110
U Simpleton -----	95 117 22 88
V Just fine -----	113 27 94 43 18

(Solution on page 27)

	1	2	3	4		5	6		7	8	
9	10	11	12		13	14	15		16	17	18
19		20		21	22	23	24		25	26	27
28	29		30	31		32	33	34		35	36
37	38	39		40	41	42	43		44	45	
46	47		48	49	50		51	52	53	54	55
	56	57	58		59	60	61	62	63		64
65		66	67	68		69	70	71	72		73
74	75		76	77	78		79	80	81		82
83		84	85		86	87	88	89	90	91	92
93	94		95	96	97		98	99	100	101	
102		103	104	105	106		107	108	109		110
111	112		113	114	115		116	117	118	119	



# Toward a Happier Christmas

by Mrs. Jay W. Jones



This Christmas try "following the spirit" of the various customs and the Jewish Hanukkah in your preparation for a Christian Christmas.



IF THE DECEMBER HOLIDAYS seem hectic to you, with too many activities pulling your family apart instead of drawing it closer, perhaps a knowledge of the holiday customs of people around the world will help you to greater enjoyment within the family circle. In some cases you might want to "follow the letter" and reproduce the custom in your own home. In others, you may wish to "follow the spirit" of the customs involved in the two great world-wide celebrations in December: The Christian Christmas and the Jewish *Hanukkah*.

*Hanukkah* is primarily a celebration in the home, centered around a ritual conducted by the father; Christmas is usually a joint celebration between church and home. There will be much variation in these December holiday celebrations, but family assemblies and expressions of gratitude to God will characterize all of them.

Jesus participated in his family's celebration of *Hanukkah*, a joyous festival sometimes called the "Festival of Lights." It commemorates the dedication of a new altar

in the cleansed temple at Jerusalem after it had been defiled by a foreign king. Less than two hundred years after this event, when Jesus helped light the festival lights, he was probably thinking of the heroes who had died for freedom of worship, and their example that those who have faith in God will eventually triumph.

Now, over 2,000 years later, when Jewish families celebrate the Festival of Lights, they still think of these things. Recent persecutions, particularly under Hitler, have added new depth of meaning to the celebration. Today the festival is a message to all people that the light of understanding, right, and justice will forever win out over injustice, intolerance, and hatred.

The family gathers around the *Hanukkah* candlestick, which has nine candles altogether, the center one being used only to light the four branches on either side. On the first day of the festival, one candle is lighted; and each succeeding day one more, until all eight are burning. Three or four benedictions are recited by the fa-

ther. One, which is used last each evening, reads, "We kindle these lights because of the miracles, the deliverance, and the wonders which Thou didst for our fathers, through thy holy priests. During all the eight days of *Hanukkah* these lights are sacred, and we are not permitted to make profane use of them, but we are just to look at them, in order that we may give thanks to Thy name for Thy miracles, Thy deliverance, and wonders."

The light from the *Hanukkah* candles may not be used for reading or working. They must be large enough to burn a half-hour. During that time, the celebrants "... just look at them, in order that we may give thanks. . . ." The family worship service is the focus of the Feast of Lights.

Unlike the celebration of *Hanukkah*, which is the same no matter in what country the celebrants live, Christmas customs vary from country to country. However, there is one wonderful similarity—they all endeavor to tell the story of the birth of the Christ Child and to express the joy and





The Hanukkah is the time for playing the dreydel game which Jewish children enjoy.

gratitude of men.

Perhaps the most universal Christmas custom is the setting up of a nativity scene in the home. Your family might enjoy one of these three variations:

In Spain, the figures of the three wise men are placed some distance from the nativity scene. Each day they are moved a trifle closer, so that they reach the manger on January 6.

Country children in France weave a bit of realism into their representation of the nativity. They gather bright berries, pretty rocks, and moss, which they use to make a miniature Bethlehem hillside setting for the crèche. The hill often rises in terraces that are covered with moss, miniature trees, and rocks. Footpaths and a winding road are woven into the landscape. Flocks of sheep, shepherds, and other figures are sometimes placed on the hill.

Mexican Christians observe a most picturesque custom in connection with the nativity scene. It is completed in mid-December except for the figure of the infant Jesus in the manger. On Christ-

mas Eve, the family and friends (except for the hostess) form a procession. Carrying lighted candles and singing, they march through the various rooms of the house. One of them carries the figure of baby Jesus. Finally, they come to a stop at the door to the parlor in which the nativity scene has been placed. Between the procession and the hostess, who stands inside the parlor door, a dialogue something like this takes place:

"Who knocks at my door, so late in the night?"

"We are pilgrims, without shelter, and we want only a place to rest."

"I have no room. Go somewhere else and disturb me not again."

"The night is very cold. We have come from afar and we are tired."

"Who are you? I know you not."

"I am Joseph of Nazareth, a carpenter, and with me is Mary, my wife, who will be the mother of Christ."

"Then come into my humble

home, and welcome! And may the Lord give shelter to my soul when I leave this world!"

The doors to the parlor are opened and the candle-lit procession enters, singing joyous hymns. The figure of the Christ Child is placed in the manger. A concluding Christmas hymn is sung, or a prayer is said, the candles are extinguished, and the whole group retires to the patio for a gay party.

Usually the party begins with a display of fireworks. There is dancing, and much laughing, talking, and eating.

When all have had plenty to eat and drink, a large *piñata* made of clay and filled with candy and small gifts for the children is lowered on a cord. The children take turns, while blindfolded, trying to break the *piñata* with a stick. When one is finally successful, there is a merry scramble as its contents shower out on the floor.

Some Christmas customs are relics of ancient pagan rites or the old Roman Saturnalia. One of these with which we are familiar is the use of mistletoe in Christmas decorations. The mistletoe was a sacred plant to the Druids in Gaul, Britain, and Ireland when Christianity was brought to those countries many centuries ago. The Druids hung it over the entrances to their homes because they thought it would prevent sickness.

The Christian missionaries wisely recognized that, rather than try to uproot established customs and destroy the culture of the people, it was better to transform their traditions. So the mistletoe became a pleasant part of our Christmas holidays. Nowadays few know, and still fewer care, that the mistletoe was once a part of a pagan religion.

Into this category of "leftovers" from some ancient practices fall many merry December holiday customs both here and abroad, particularly those having to do with fire. The use of candles and the Yule Log are among these.

In Serbia there is a ceremonious lighting of the Yule Log, conducted by the father. He concludes the ritual by saying "May God, and the happy and holy



Christmas keep thee." Members of the family kiss each other and say "The peace of God be between us today. Christ is born, truly he is born; let us bow before our Christ."

Yugoslavsians wreath the Yule Log with garlands of greenery. When it is carried in by the father, the rest of the family stand on each side of the door, holding lighted candles, and conduct him to the hearth.

In several countries the charred remains of the Yule Log are preserved for a year, after which time it is used to light the new Yule Log.

The Armenians also have a Christmas fire, but it is not made by lighting a log. On Christmas Eve the family, carrying lighted tapers, gathers in the courtyard, where a pile of dry thorns has been placed in one corner. The youngest member of the family reads from the Bible, then, the

thorns are ignited. Gazing into the fire, the family sings native psalms. When the fire dies down, each member of the family leaps three times across the glowing embers while making a wish.

The United States and a few of the European countries are the only countries in which gifts are given on Christmas Day. Everywhere else, Christmas Day is strictly a religious observance. Gifts are exchanged on Christmas Eve, December 6, or January 6. The latter date commemorates the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child and the gifts which they gave him. December 6 is the birthdate of St. Nicholas.

In Holland, Belgium, and Germany, boys and girls receive their presents from St. Nicholas. On the eve of his birthday, a man on a white horse representing St. Nicholas parades the streets of many Dutch cities. He wears a long robe and a bishop's

miter. He carries a staff and a bag containing presents. Beside him runs his black servant, Rupert, carrying candy for good children and birch rods for naughty ones. That night everyone puts a shoe by the fireplace. In each shoe is a tidbit for St. Nicholas' horse—some hay, a carrot, or perhaps a few beans. In the morning the fodder is gone, and the shoes contain small cakes and toys. Individual gifts to each other are always accompanied by verses written especially for that purpose. Reading the verses aloud as each gift is opened in turn is an indispensable part of the family fun.

The Spanish gala day of the season is the "Twelfth Day of Christmas"—January 6. Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar come on their camels with gifts for the children. The adults also exchange gifts on this day. For dessert at their feast, there is a large round "King's Cake" in which a tiny doll has been baked. Whoever is served the piece containing the doll becomes "king" for the day and is considered very lucky. The "king" must later give a party for everyone present at the dinner!

Czechoslovakians consider their Christmas feast a birthday dinner for the Christ Child, so one chair is left vacant for him. The tiniest child can understand this!

There is a fascinating variety in our world-wide celebrations during the month of December, but all are similar in their purpose: They endeavor to draw families together in love and worship, and in expression of thanks to God.

*(See meeting plans on pages 24, 25.)*



Today the Hanukkah celebration is a message to all people that the light of understanding, right, and justice will forever win out over injustice, intolerance, and hatred.





# THE HOLLOW OF HIS HAND

by Shirley L. Hill

HARI GAZED DOWN THE DUSTY ROAD with wistful longing. Only five miles, but his mother had forbidden him to go. What could he do? He wanted to go so very much.

"Hari! Hari Padma, where are you?" came a woman's shrill call. His shoulders drooped as he turned back from the road and his dreaming. He hurried down the sandy lane through the sleepy village, to a mud and thatch house.

His mother looked up with a frown, "What a sorrow is mine that I have raised a child who does nothing but stand by the road and dream! Why are you

"I have watched you, boy,  
as you gaze down the road. . .  
What do you see in those dreams  
of yours?"



Illustrated by Art FitzSimmons



## "The Hollow of His Hand"

not here to help your poor father and me?"

"Ma, I ironed all the morning. Then I delivered the clean clothes to the pundit, as you asked. Am I not allowed a few moments to rest?" he replied gently.

His father interrupted the string of abuse from the woman with a command.

"Silence, woman! Why do you speak thus to our only son, our only child? He is a good boy, working hard to help feed us. Let us give thanks to the gods that he chose willingly to stay at home and be a laundryman, like his father and grandfather. You have seen how the other village boys drift away and forget their parents. Hari could have easily gone to Calcutta and found adventure and money, too. Would you reward his loyalty with curses?"

Her answer was the low mutter of hostility, as she picked up a bucket to go to the well. The two men watched her departure with a mixture of sadness and relief.

Hari took the flat irons from the old man's gnarled hands, saying, "Sit down, my father, and let me iron this bundle. The missionary sahib was eager to get these shirts this week."

With skillful assurance, the handsome young man started to iron the cotton shirts. The father watched him, and thanked the gods silently for such a stalwart son. Not a man in the village had a finer son!

He spoke suddenly, "I have watched you, boy, as you gaze down the road toward Bhimpore." He chuckled softly, "What do you see in those dreams of yours?"

Hari's voice trembled with eagerness as the torrent of words poured forth. "O my father, I have a friend in Bhimpore. It is Mr. Long, the missionary sahib. As you know, it has long been my desire to learn to read and write. The missionary sahib has taught me! Each Saturday night, after I have delivered the clean laundry, he teaches me. With infinite patience, he has guided my hand so that now I can write my name!"

At his father's clucks of amazement, Hari took a stick and wrote his name in the dust.

"And further, I can now read many pages of a small book he gave me. Would you like to see it?" he asked proudly.

Rajen Babu nodded a vigorous assent, and in a few seconds the two were poring over the carefully guarded book. The lad read simply and clearly, while Rajen listened with awe and wonder.

Suddenly the precious book was snatched from his fingers. Hari looked up to see his mother tear it in two. Before he could stop her, she threw it into the fire. With a cry of anguish, both physical and mental, the boy thrust his hand into the heart of the flames, and rescued the burning pages. He ran sobbing from the courtyard into the cowshed. Anxiously examining it, he rubbed away the cinders, blew away the ashes. At least half of the book was safe!

While he hid the remnants of the pages, his parents' voices rose in loud imprecations.

"I warn you, Wife. You have gone too far this time! What if his hand were badly injured because of your jealousy!"

"My lord, you will spoil the boy. He was a good child until he began to visit the missionaries in that Christian village! Why do you continue to send him there each week with the laundry? Do you want him to become a Christian?"

"Woman, you have interfered once too often. I am the head of this house, and Hari is my only child. He is happy because he has learned to read and write. What danger can there be?" he demanded.

"You are a fool not to see what will happen," she hissed. "Do you not know that the first thing they do is to woo them with learning, as though he were from a well-born house. They give them many things to read. Soon he will be too good for his old parents; too good for the village of his birth. He will leave us, and there will be mourning in this house! And if he becomes a Christian, then where will be your comfort?"

"Not from you, Bidoot," he said sadly. "From whence has come this cruel tongue of yours? You did not used to speak in this way to your husband and only son."

She turned away to hide a tear-streaked face, murmuring brokenly: "I think only of you, my lord. What if our son does become a Christian? Who then will perform the Hindu burial rites for you? Ah, the gods were angry at me, for they denied me the joy of giving you many children, many sons!"

"This is an old grief. The gods have given us one son, healthy, strong, and bright. Let us not disturb the gods with our futile longings. Be glad that I did not take another wife who could bear me many sons! Do not forbid again his books and missionary friend. Do you hear? I am still the master of this house!" he thundered.

She bowed her head in silent acquiescence, and bent to pound the rice grain with a rude *dhenky*. The afternoon wore on, and the flat irons steamed and sputtered with the happy vigor of the young laundry boy.

It was Christmas Eve. Sally Lee sang carols as she wrapped strips of cotton laboriously around every branch, each twig of the young sal tree. Two little blonde boys toddled seriously around the lower branches, trying in vain to imitate their mother's work.

A cough rang hollowly through the big living room. Sally turned at the sound, with a chuckle. When would she ever get used to the idea that in India people do not knock on doors? They simply stand there and cough!

She greeted the young *dhoby* (laundryman) with a happy *namaskar* and welcomed him to the little family circle. In a few seconds he had put down the bundle of clothes, and at her invitation, laughingly helped to trim the Christmas tree.

"Oh, Hari Padma!" Sally exclaimed. "We had a



letter yesterday from Rev. and Mrs. Long. He asked many questions about you, and sent you his warm greetings!"

Hari's face flushed with delight, and he began to ask shy questions about the now retired missionary, who had befriended him years ago. Then a strange sadness stole over his face and Sally's heart ached for him.

"How is your family, Hari?" she asked cheerfully. "I hope the new little daughter is over her cold?" she inquired.

At this, he buried his face in his hands and could not meet Sally's anxious eyes. John Lee came into the room just then, and in a few moments, Hari's sad tale was told.

"She has gone. My wife and four children are gone. Ma took them with her on a visit to kinspeople two weeks ago. They have sent word that if I am baptized, they will not return. And worse, Aroti has threatened to arrange a Hindu marriage for our oldest son, immediately, though he is but six. They will make sure that I never see him again! What can I do?" he pleaded.

They thought of the years since the young boy Hari had first met Mr. Long. Seven years had brought him to manhood, and an awakening sense of responsibility to his child wife. His marriage to her at fourteen and the coming of the four precious children had deepened his loving nature. The years had also deepened his Christian faith. He had brought clean clothes faithfully each Saturday evening for years, and stayed for the church service on Sunday. Rev. Long's return to America had been a personal loss, but it had not affected Hari's faith in Christ.

Twice he had asked for baptism. Twice his mother and young wife had threatened his life if he did such a thing. The Bhimpore Church Committee hesitated to allow him to take such a risk. Each time they had postponed the ceremony, suggesting that time and prayer might soften the women's hearts, and perhaps they, too, could be won for the Lord!

Now, the baptism was in sight. The date arranged for the third time. Hari had told the village elders that he was willing to face persecution, even death, to be called "Christian."

"Sahib," he asked brokenly, "I can face trial for myself. But what about the children? If I go ahead with the baptism, I may never see my little ones again! They will surely become Hindus, never knowing of Jesus' love for them!"

Not for the first time, Sally wondered if Americans could ever hope to understand the complexities of life in Asia. How could the average churchgoer in America ever hope to understand the agonies of the Christian life in India?

John broke into her reflections with his warm voice of concern, "We must pray, Hari. We will pray now together, and continue to pray that God will show you the way. Remember he has told us he will not leave us alone, but will come to us and comfort us!" They prayed—the three young people. They repre-

sented different continents, peoples, languages, and cultures, but loved the same Christ.

Firecrackers exploded all around the pond with a joyous gusto. Sally jumped each time they banged. It seemed such a peculiar way to express joy at a baptism! Each time one of the new Christians came up out of the waters, a "bomb" exploded. She had been rather dismayed about it during her first year in India. Westerners make baptism such a solemn occasion. She had learned that for the Eastern mind, this was a time of gay merrymaking. Eight of the candidates today were all under twenty-one, she thought. So their friends are shooting off firecrackers to help them rejoice!

Then her heart began to beat rapidly as she saw a young man walk down the bank, into the quiet waters of the village pond. Suddenly a hush fell over the crowd as though they sensed a change in the atmosphere. Old Pastor Babu's voice was firm as he asked the young man:

"Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior?"

"I do," came the resolute reply from Hari Padma.

"I baptize you, then, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Hari's face was radiant. He walked out of the water with a joy that tugged at everyone's hearts. He hesitated a moment as he stood on the shore. It was the custom that each new candidate be given a new piece of clothing by his family or close friends. Then Sally hurried forward. She covered his dripping *dhoti* with a bright new cloth.

As he placed his hands together for a grateful gesture of thanks, she realized that he had resigned

(Continued on page 28)

## WILBUR



"Doesn't it sadden you a little, Daddy, to know that someday I'll be too big to buy toys for?"



**Today's parents face new challenges in guiding the moral development of their teen-agers.**

FOR CHRISTIAN PARENTS, a difficult responsibility is that of guiding the moral development of their teen-age children. This responsibility becomes increasingly complex, because as children approach maturity they need to achieve more and more independence of parental authority and discipline.

As they grow, adolescents become aware that the time is coming when they must make their own decisions and accept responsibility for themselves. But secretly, inwardly, they feel insecure and uncertain, even when externally they may appear most self-confident. They find themselves assailed by powerful impulses, surrounded by subtle temptations, and baffled by contradictory opinions as to the standards by which they ought to shape their conduct. They are pulled in many directions by varying social currents, just as if they were swimmers caught among foam-crested rocks in churning rapids.

Is there any clear moral star by which a teen-ager can chart his life course in this twentieth century? This is an understandable question in a day when standards seem to be constantly changing. Certain concepts that made for a rigid moral code in a previous century now seem invalid to many persons. Many historic moral dictums are losing their force. Even among Christian families, communities and congregations there is a wide variety of attitudes and approaches to moral and ethical problems. The old codes have cracked and left us with a confusing moral situation.

Dishonesty eats away at our national honor in almost every area of public and private life, and our young people are infected by the moral sickness. Many teen-agers think it is smart to cheat on an exam, to "lift" a term paper, to "borrow" another student's notes. Some young people take whatever

they can get away with. The way teen-agers see the game of life being played convinces many of them that rules were made to be broken. Honesty may have been the best policy for Abraham Lincoln and other great men and women. But who wants to be great? Today persons just want to be comfortable.

A self-centered desire to "get ahead," to make a "fast buck," to gain pleasure and security while avoiding the disciplines that would make life a growing achievement seems to be afflicting many persons like a contagious disease. "I want what I want when I want it," is today's cry. Teen-agers are not deaf to this cry.

There is a sort of callous indifference to the good of others in relations between the sexes. "Love me, love me, love me," is the popular song. "I want to be loved." Little attention is given to the fine art of loving, which means seeking the best for another, self-giving rather than self-seeking.

In the midst of such a society, what must be the attitudes of Christians? How can Christian parents help to develop moral integrity in their teen-age children?

All conscientious parents encounter certain heart-searching questions that are innocent enough in themselves, but can have moral complications. Jim asks permission to borrow the family car to take Alice to the senior prom; they want to stay late with the gang, and don't want to be expected home until dawn. Sally wants to stay all night at Fran's house for a slumber party. Mary asks what she should do now that almost all her girl friends smoke. Hal maintains that social drinking is common among his friends, and wonders if he shouldn't join in.

These and a multitude of similar problem-questions with moral implications are constantly confronting the parents of teen-agers in our time. The immediate questions are perplexing, but even more serious moral problems are

# AS OLD CODES CRACK

by  
**James  
Wesley  
Ingles**

often associated with them.

As Christian parents deal with these problems they need at all times to respect the individuality and integrity of their teen-agers. An adolescent should no longer be forced to do or to refrain merely because his parents have said so. He has a right to know why his parents have committed themselves to certain moral principles, and why they are encouraging him to guide his life by them, too.

In the world, the old codes crack. However, we cannot isolate ourselves or our children from the world. We cannot insulate our young people from all contact with the false standards of worldly persons.

John Milton has clearly expressed one of the reasons why isolation is not a responsible Christian choice.

"I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal

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garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. . . . He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian."

We ourselves want to participate fully in the life about us, to be in the world and yet not of it, to share in the culture of our time and yet not conform to pagan practices. We wish our children to mature as free beings, distinguishing between right and wrong, and making their own decisions. As Milton maintained, no one is really good until he freely chooses the good, until he prefers it to the most glittering counterfeit pleasure.

John Ruskin, the great art critic and social reformer of the nineteenth century, was brought up in a Victorian Christian home. His mother required him to memorize whole chapters of the Bible. In his autobiography Ruskin said that he counted this the most precious and, on the whole, the one essential

part of his education. He was so protected, sheltered, directed that he had nothing to endure. "Danger or pain of any kind I knew not; my strength was never exercised, my patience never tried, and my courage never fortified." He had nothing to determine for himself. "The bridle and blinkers were never taken off me." His mother even moved to Oxford to be near him while he was in the university. And so, when he came to manhood, he said, "ceaseless authority left me adrift. I was cramped indeed but not disciplined, and only by protection innocent instead of by practice virtuous."

One could contrast with Ruskin's rigid and over-protected upbringing that of Milton. As a youth, Milton shared in adult discussions of the problems of his time, and when he went to Cambridge, he stood unshaken in the midst of the many temptations that beguiled university students. When Milton traveled abroad in Europe, he kept himself clean and true to the highest standards.

Sometimes we think that problems of morality are peculiar to our age. Actually conditions have been as bad and often worse in earlier times. Then, as now, Christian young people learned to stand unafraid, staunch, and unyielding against the immoral currents of their time. We need to challenge our young people to have the courage to stand against the tide, to dare to do God's will though others flaunt it.

This is not easy. Adolescents want to conform, to be in step with the gang. In the years when they are seeking a place in society, they are reluctant to be different, afraid to be thought "queer." On the other hand, adolescence is a period of idealism. When youth are challenged by a noble ideal and a worthy example, they have the capacity to rise to the challenge.

Believing that we can help our teen-agers develop moral integrity,

and believing that we must so assist them, we begin looking for ways of aiding them. It is important that we guide them and endeavor not to manipulate them. We must help them to make responsible moral decisions and not presume to make the decisions for them. If we rigidly clamp arbitrary restrictions upon our teen-agers, we are sowing the seeds of future rebellion and are likely to produce a reaction that may carry them far from the ideals we are seeking to inculcate.

Among the moral influences we can assist our teen-agers with is their reading. The market is flooded today with books and magazines; some degrade and defile the imagination, others challenge readers to resist evil and do good. We cannot meet this problem by parental censorship. One high-school boy once brought home a paperback copy of Faulkner's *Sanctuary*, a book that seemed to his father thoroughly defiling. Faulkner admits to have written it as a "penny shocker." The father was able to speak to his son about the matter. For years, the boy had been reading adult books, such as Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*, and discussing them with his parents. When he brought home Faulkner's book, his father conversationally suggested that it could do him no good, and might do him a great deal of harm. The father, who had the book in his hand, suggested that it be put away until a later date.

"You know," the son said with disarming and ingenuous honesty, "I can buy another copy."

"Yes, I know," the father replied, "but I hope you will not. I feel sure you won't."

Throughout this conversation, the father dealt with his son as a person, not a puppet. He helped his boy decide not to read *Sanctuary* right then; he did not dictate such a decision.

A merely negative attitude in this area, as well as in others, will

(Continued on page 30)





# What Does Christmas Really Mean?

by Doris Clore Demaree

THE WORD "CHRISTMAS" COMES FROM AN EARLY ENGLISH EXPRESSION "Christes Masse," which means "Christ's Mass." "Mass" is thought of as the Eucharistic rite of the Latin Church, which is quite an elaborate ceremony. The *Webster's New International Dictionary* (unabridged) gives the definition of Christmas as, "An annual church festival, kept on December 25 in memory of the birth of Christ. It is celebrated generally by a particular church service, and by special gifts, greetings, and hospitality. . . ."

What does Christmas really mean? We turn to our Bibles. "*Good news of a great joy which will come to all the people;*" "Good news," "great joy," not to one, or two, or even three, but "to all the people." To be sure, the birth of any baby is good news to some people. How wonderful it must have been when you were born. Your parents undoubtedly were happy. If you had older brothers and sisters, they probably were happy at your birth. But, really, important as you are, not too many people had particular joy when you were born. *But Jesus was different.*

Despite the record of Luke regarding Jesus' birth; despite the record of Matthew concerning the coming of the wise men to bring gifts and to worship, we have no records of people beginning the celebration of "Christmas" immediately.

John says, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son. . . .*" What good news and great joy that can be to everyone. God, the Creator of this magnificent universe, loves you and me. He loves everyone else in the universe (even though they may live on another planet). He has loved them yesterday, he loves them today, and he will love them tomorrow. The thought is so tremendous it leaves one almost breathless! God the Father, Lord of all, loves you and me and everyone. He always has; he always will.

Can you imagine the wonder and grandeur of that hour when God created man? These words catch something of God's rapture in that hour:

Playing with space,  
And atoms, and gases,  
God had a wonderful PLAN:  
Planets and suns took form in space—  
Whirling—orbiting—  
He created the waters—and land!  
Slowly, oh, so slowly they formed—  
Mountains and rivers and seas—

The author is Director of Children's Work, Association of the Christian Churches in Indiana.

Bringing forth plants,  
Sea monsters, amoeba,  
Birds of the air—  
Cattle and all creeping things!  
And then—he dared  
To make MAN!

Oh, the wonder of that hour when God risked everything as he created man in his own image—an hour to be followed so very swiftly with his own unimaginable agony as man in sin estranged himself from God. How can one conceive the agony of aeon upon aeon of watching, yearning, loving?

"*For God so loved . . . that he gave*" not only this untold agony but more—"his only Son."

Again God risked—for man. What love! Jesus—Teacher! And he taught that more than anything else it is good to love God—not only is it good, but it is even beyond that. "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,*" he said. How plainly can one speak? No chance here for misunderstanding is there? But listen, "*And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*"

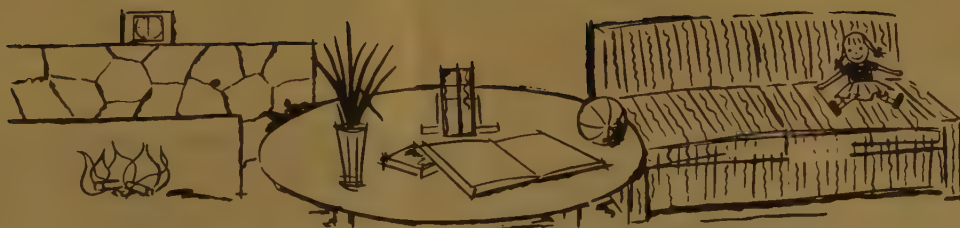
God's Son—and yet they spat on him, they crowned him with thorns and put a purple robe on him. Then they crucified him like a common thief. Is this the meaning of Christmas? Can this be the one of whom it was said that his birth brought "good news of a great joy . . . to all the people?" Is this why we, year after year, express love and joy in countless ways at Christmastime? How black that night must have been following Calvary. Joy? God's love? But where, and how?

Then came Easter morning. And light, and understanding began to break forth in the minds and hearts of some. "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.*" "*God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. . . .*" How long can God continue to yearn for his own? God's love—through Christ—reconciling you and me in all our estrangement—our sin—to himself. This is the real meaning of Christmas!

"Christmas is Jesus' birthday!  
Christmas is Jesus' birthday!  
That's why we're happy  
And that's why we're gay!  
Christmas is Jesus' birthday!"

So sing the children at Christmastime. And we join them—in joy and praise—but more, in confession and proclamation that *God loves!*





# FAMILY WORSHIP

for parents

## Christmas 1981

Margaret and John Davis were planning their first Christmas in their own home. They had married during their senior year in college and had lived in apartments while John was getting launched in the business world. Now there was young Mark and a new home of their own. What a joyous time it was going to be for them!

John, who was usually the serious member of the family, said, "What we really should think about is Christmas 1981."

"1981? Let's think about this one before we go dreaming about the far-distant future, if you please," said Margaret.

But John continued, "Remember when our families were together last year, how we talked about family traditions and their meaning? This is our first Christmas in our own home and if our son is to have some of these memories we must start now. If he should follow in our footsteps, he may be starting his own family traditions on Christmas of 1981!"

Just as the Davis' are planning ahead for precious memories, other families are seeking the true meaning of Christmas and finding ways of making the good news of great joy felt within each member of the family (see the article "What Does Christmas Really Mean?" on page 12).

One family sets aside the early part of Christmas Eve for their very own. Together they set up a special worship scene, decide what they will say as they light special candles, assign duties to each member of the family. One year the seven-year-old thrilled and delighted them with her own prayer.

One mother plans for leisurely shopping with each child in turn. Sometimes they have lunch together down town. This child feels it is his own day, something special shared with only his mother. If possible, Daddy takes a turn with other children in the family. Each child is assigned a special place for his surprises, and it would be a family disgrace if anyone so much as took a peek in any of these hideouts.

One thing Margaret and John wanted to carry over

from their own memories was candle lighting. They decided on three candles of graduated sizes: a white, a deep blue, and a red. The white one was to be lighted for the baby, Jesus, the real reason for the celebration. Because there were four Saturdays in December, and the last one was on Christmas Eve, the couple decided to set the early part of these evenings aside for their family worship. On the second week they planned to light the dark blue candle, next in size, as a reminder of the watching shepherds out in the fields under the deep blue nighttime sky. The third was a red one, representing the rich, red robes of the wise men who sought the miracle of Christmas. On the fourth week, they would light all of the candles then read the Christmas story of the birth, the shepherds, and the wise men.

On the pages that follow the plan just described will be used.

### Material for Children

The materials that will be especially helpful for preschoolers are marked (K); for primaries (P), and juniors (J).

### Preparation

Read Luke 2:1-20. Assign someone to buy candles and greens for the worship setting. Bring out the crèche. Visit the library for helpful books. These may be: *Jesus, the Little New Baby*, by Mary Edna Lloyd; *Fifty Years of Christmas*, by Ruth M. Elmquist; *Handbook of Christmas Decoration*, by Dorothy Waugh; *Christmas Idea Book*, by Biddle and Blom; *The Complete Christmas Book*, edited by Franklin Watts.

Many good recordings are on the market. *Christmas Carols*, by Dick Liebert, RCA; *Christmas Hymns*, by George Beverly Shea, RCA; *Christmas Carols*, by Jesse Crawford, Parade, are recommended.

Talk about your Christmas plans. Other families may be so enthused they will follow your example. Take time each day for quiet reading. You will become calm, serene, and gentle. It will reflect in the faces of your family. Let this be a joyful time, so that from it may come more family traditions.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the material on the worship pages was prepared by Pearl Barnes Smith.

## Theme for

## December:

## Good News of Great Joy



A Bible Passage

*And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.—Luke 2:6-7.*

**Prayer:** Dear God, we are glad for Jesus, born on the first Christmas so long ago. His birth brings us joy as it did to the shepherds watching their sheep in the fields. Help us to worship and honor him in all we do this Christmas and always. Amen.

Baby Jesus and His Mother

When Baby Jesus, long ago,  
Was lying on the hay,  
His mother loved him, this I know,  
In every mother way.  
I know she stroked his shining hair;  
She looked into his eyes,  
And as she gave him gentle care,  
She sang sweet lullabies.

—Florence Pedigo Jansson<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from *Hearthstone*, copyrighted December, 1954.

The Birthday Celebration (K)

Mother was polishing the silver candle holders. "Are we having company, Mother?" asked Mark. "In a way," said Mother. "At least we are planning for a birthday celebration, and we will use our best candle holders."

Mark was five. He loved birthdays and presents. Mother looked lovingly at him as she said, "You remember why we celebrate Christmas, don't you Mark?"

Mark did remember. "Christmas is Jesus' birthday," he said. "Are we going to have a cake like we did last year?" he asked.

Mother was quiet for a while, then she said, "This year, Daddy and I would like to begin something that we hope to do every year. Tonight we will light a candle for Jesus' birthday. On another night we will light one for the story of the shepherds and later another for the story of the wise men."

"Will I get to help?" asked Mark.

"Yes, you may sing one of the songs you like best and you may hold the candle for Daddy."

That night Mark, Daddy, and Mother gathered about a beautiful worship setting. There was a picture of the baby Jesus and his mother. There was the family Bible open to where it tells about Jesus' birth, and the white candle in the shiny silver holder. Mark sang "Away in a Manger." Daddy read from the Bible while Mark held the candle carefully.

With the candle on the table and the Bible in Daddy's lap, they held hands and said, "Thank you, God, for Christmas—Jesus' birthday."

A Favorite Song (P,J)

The favorite Christmas carol of most families is "Silent Night." As you sing this song now, think how many people have sung it. It was written in 1818: the words by Joseph Mohr and the music by his good friend, Franz Gruber. Since that time many persons, big and little, have loved it.

What makes you like this hymn? The music? Hum it and listen. Do the words say what you want them to say? How do you feel when you sing it? Listen to the words as Mother or Daddy reads. Do pictures form in your mind as you listen? Describe these to your family. Do you usually sing all the verses of this Christmas carol? Are they important to the song?

Could you make up a Christmas song and add the music? Try it.

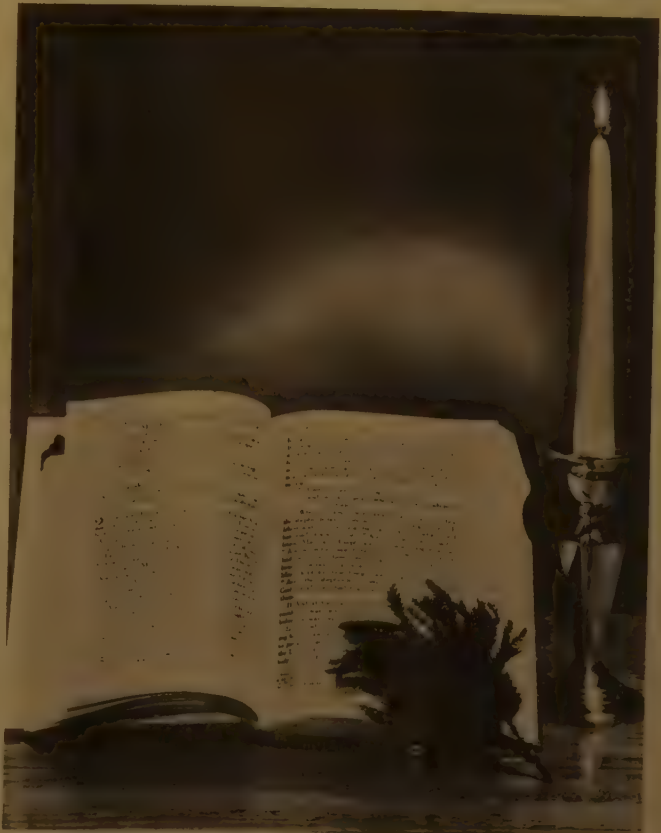
Sing some of your favorite church school Christmas songs.

*Lighting of the White Candle:* "I light this candle of Joy, because of the birth of the baby, Jesus. We will have joy this Christmas!"

*Listen to a Favorite Christmas Recording.*

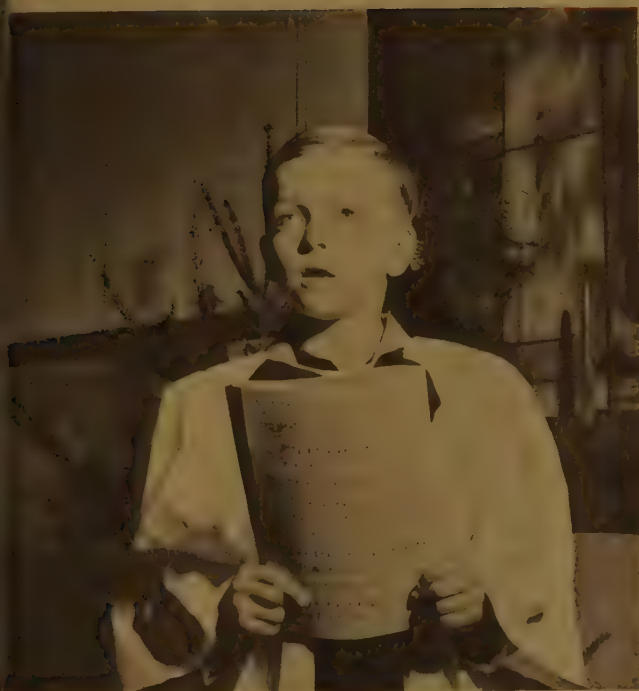
**Prayer:** We are thankful for the account of the birth of Jesus. Thank you, God, for men like Joseph Mohr and Franz Gruber who give us beautiful music. Help us to keep Christmas in our hearts always. Amen.

—Religious News Service Photo





## Theme: Keeping Watch



—Luoma Photos

## While Shepherds Watched (P,J)

Read aloud the words of the hymn, "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks." Does it tell the story of the shepherds as it is told in the Book of Luke? Read the story on this page. As you read, ask someone to check the words of the song. Compare the stories.

Many years ago people used the psalms as hymns. When hymn writers began offering songs such as the beloved Christmas carols as additions to the psalm-hymns, some people were opposed to them.

When Nahum Tate wrote this song in 1700, it was one of the first songs offered. It is now one of our best loved and most sung Christian carols.

Perhaps when Jesus was a boy he went with shepherd friends to the fields where he felt the quiet of the night, heard the small noises of the sheep as they settled in for the night. Maybe he even heard the crackles in the bushes and wondered if wild animals were about.

We feel sure he listened to the tales shepherds told of their experiences with wild animals, how they went hunting for lost little lambs, and many other exciting stories that thrill boys.

Can you find another story in the Bible that makes you think this might be true? Luke tells one in the fifteenth chapter of his Gospel that you might read with this in mind.

Sing the hymn. Sing other favorite carols.

Go outside and look up at the nighttime sky. Try to think how the shepherds must have felt as they saw the sky above them change so suddenly. If you had been there, would you have been afraid, too?

## A Bible Passage

*And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people."*

—Luke 2:8-10.

## Christmas Day

"There's no room at the inn," they said,  
That early Christmas morn,  
So a manger in a stable  
Was the place where Christ was born.

The little lambs stood round about,  
As innocent as He,  
As Jesus slept in Mary's arms  
And filled her heart with glee.

Now we rejoice and celebrate  
In a very special way,  
To show our love for our dear Lord  
On His birthday, Christmas Day.

—Lorraine Judson Carbery

## Keeping Watch on Love (K)

When Mother finished reading the poem, "Christmas Day" (printed on this page), Mark asked, "Are we going to show love on Jesus' birthday?"

"We'll try," said Mother. "Tomorrow after breakfast we will make our first batch of Christmas cookies."

"Goodie!" said Mark. "I can take some to Mr. Cook. He has to sit in a chair all day."

"Mark," said Mother, "you have just thought of a way to show love. You wondered if we were going to show love this Christmas."

"But tomorrow is not Jesus' birthday," said Mark.

"No," agreed Mother, "but because of the birthday of Jesus who grew to be a kind and loving person, we try to show love not only on his birthday, but every day of the year."

"I'd sure like to celebrate MY birthday every day in the year," sighed Mark.

Would you?

**Candle Lighting:** "I light the blue candle to remind us of the night when shepherds watched. When we look up at the nighttime sky, we will remember the angels' song of joy which the shepherds heard."

**Prayer:** For ears to hear the stories true, for eyes to see the nighttime blue, we thank you, Father. Amen.



## Theme: A Sign



Giorgione, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. Samuel H. Kress Collection. Used by permission.

### Picture Interpretation (P,J)

The picture on this page called "Adoration of the Shepherds" is an unusual one by Giorgione (pronounced jor-jo-na). He was a fine young painter who died when he was only thirty-two. He loved painting the misty sunlight of late afternoon. Look at the softly illuminated scene with its warmth and its human color and light.

In color, the picture shows the sky a soft blue-gray with browns and greens in the background. Joseph's clothing is gold and dark brown. Mary wears brown, blue, and white. The shepherds are in blue, white, orange, and a brownish green.

Is this the way you thought the stable looked when Jesus was born? What would you change if you were painting it? When you look at other paintings, notice how each artist feels about this scene.

After the family had found a home for their baby, the wise men came to worship him, bringing gifts. We give gifts at Christmas to show our love, too.

### Kim Learns About Giving (K)

When Kim walked into the kindergarten his friends, Mark and Don, were already busy.

"What are you doing?" asked Kim.

"Making surprises. I'm making a bookmark for my grandmother. She is coming tomorrow," said Don.

"Do you want to make a Christmas gift?" asked the teacher. Kim was not sure. He had not thought about making gifts for anyone. He had been thinking of the gifts he hoped he would get. He sat down near Mark and watched.

Mark said, "Christmas is Jesus' birthday. That's why we give presents. We made some surprise cookies for our sick neighbor. He was glad."

Soon Kim was busy putting red seals on a green bookmark. It was for Daddy. He decided that giving was fun. He began to feel so happy that when Mark began to sing "Away in a Manger," he joined in the singing. Maybe he would even sing it to the baby when he went home.

### A Bible Passage

*"To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"*

—Luke 2:11-14

### On Christmas Morn

The Christ was born  
On Christmas morn,  
That day so long ago.

The shepherds came  
From far away,  
That day so long ago.

They brought young lambs  
To keep Him warm,  
That day so long ago.

Soon wise men came,  
They saw the star,  
That day so long ago.

—Daniel C. Tuttle, Jr.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from *Hearthstone*, copyrighted December, 1952.

### Candle Lighting Service

*Father:* "Tonight we will light our tall red candle as a reminder of the wise men who came to worship the baby, Jesus, and who brought gifts to honor him. This Christmas as we give gifts we will remember the star the wise men followed and the gifts they brought to the Baby."

*Listen to a Favorite Christmas Recording.*

*Sing a Favorite Christmas Carol.* If several members of the family have favorite carols, sing more than one.

*Prayer:* (The family may join hands while Father prays.) We are thankful for the sign—the star that lead the wise men to the Baby. Thank you for planning for families who love and help one another. Amen.



## Theme: Let Us Go See

### Together We Worship

Divide the crèche figures so that each member has one or more. As Father again reads the Bible passage for the first week (see page 14), the figures of Mary, Joseph, and the Baby may be placed in the spot chosen for them.

As Mother reads the Bible passage printed on this page, the figures of the shepherds may be added to the worship setting.

As the family sings "Silent Night," complete the crèche scene with the remaining figures.

**Candle Lighting:** One member may light all three candles, or chosen ones may take turns.

"We now light our Christmas candles:

"A white one for Joy, because of the birth of the baby, Jesus. We will have joy."

*Sing:* "Away in a Manger."

"We light a blue candle to remind us of the dark sky on the night long ago when shepherds in the field watched. We will look

up at the nighttime sky when we are outside and remember that time.

"We light a red candle to remind us of the rich robes of the wise men who followed the star, carrying gifts to the baby, Jesus. As we give our gifts we will remember the star and the Baby."

*Father:* "White, blue, and red candles make us think of the Christmas story. They are also the colors in our flag: America, the land we love, the place where we may worship as we wish."

*Sing:* "Silent Night," stanza 2.

*Prayer:* If you have not planned another prayer, you may use this litany or make one of your own.

For our family and the things we do together,

*We thank you, God.*

For another year to plan better family activities,

*We are thankful.*

For our neighborhood and the good times we share,

*We thank you, God:*

For our church and the families we meet there,

*We are thankful.*

For our friendly minister,

*We thank you, God.*

For the beloved story of the first Christmas and the joy we feel in celebrating it,

*We thank you, God.*

Some families like to think over their Christmas celebration to see if it has honored Jesus. These questions may help you:

1. What was your favorite family Christmas activity this year?
2. What would you like to add for another year?
3. In what ways do you feel you have been good neighbors?
4. In what ways have we honored Jesus' birth? How can we do this better another year?
5. How has Christmas brought us new church friends? Name them.

### A Bible Passage

*When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.*

—Luke 2:15-16.

**Prayer:** Dear God, our Father, we are glad for Jesus, whose birth we celebrate on Christmas. We are glad for the Bible which tells us about Jesus. Help us to live in ways to honor him. Amen.

### A Christmas Gift for All

In Bethlehem where Mary found  
An humble cattle stall,  
A little Child was born one night,  
God's Christmas gift to all.

Because that Christmas gift is full  
Of love it came to bring,  
I'll share it in the deeds I do  
And in the songs I sing.

—Florence Pedigo Jansson<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from *Hearthstone*, copyrighted December, 1953.

—Religious News Service Photo







# Mother's CHRISTMAS PRESENT

by Belle Chapman Morrill

Sally had both hands in the bowl of dough . . . "Make cookies for Muzzy!"

IT WAS THE WEEK BEFORE CHRISTMAS, and Mother was rolling out Christmas cookies. Three-year-old Sally was sitting on the high kitchen stool watching her.

"Telephone, Mother!" called Glenn, the big brother. Mother wiped the flour from her hands on her apron and went to the telephone. When she came back, Sally had both hands in the bowl of dough.

"O, Sally!" cried her mother in a tone of despair.

"Make cookies for Muzzy!" Sally announced joyfully.

"Well, let's see." Sally's mother tried to smile. "Doris," she called, "will you fix a place on the other table for Sally to make her cookies?"

"O.K. Mother." Doris dropped her book and led her little sister over to the other table. She brought her a small piece of mother's dough, and a little pan. Doris liked children and always seemed to know what to do for them. Already she was earning some of her spending money as a baby-sitter.

Just then Dad and Jimmy came in loaded with bundles. Jimmy walked sideways to hide his.

"What do you have there?" asked Mother.

"No fair asking," Jimmy answered, "and don't you look under my bed."

Half an hour later when Sally's grimy cookies had been baked and she had been tucked in bed, Doris joined her father and brothers in the living room. Mother was still busy in the kitchen.

"I don't see what Mother gets out of Christmas except a lot of work," Glenn spoke up.

"Right you are about the work," Dad replied promptly.

"We could do a lot more ourselves," suggested Doris.

"Couldn't we have a meeting and committees" asked Jimmy, "like we did at camp? But Mother mustn't know."

"Listen, kids," Glenn looked excited. "She's going out tomorrow evening to church to wrap up Christmas toys. Let's have the meeting then."

Next evening when Mother started to leave the

(Continued on page 30)

Illustrated by  
Lorraine Nicholson



# A Christian Celebration of Christmas

"CHRISTMAS IN JULY!" How startling this statement which appears with increasing regularity in announcements for promotion schemes (even in churches)! The point of this, of course, is that Christmas brings to its highest peak the giving instinct within the human heart. So many groups capitalize on the magic wrapped up in the word "Christmas"

Author of *Church Officers at Work* published by Judson Press and editor-in-chief of Baptist publications for the Board of Education and Publication, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

—Luoma Photos



The decorations that we choose for our home at Christmas can speak to others of Christ's birth. A time-honored one is the lighted Christmas tree. Martin Luther is said to have started this custom when he brought home a small fir and placed lighted candles on it to represent the starry sky above the stable the night that Christ was born.

to sell merchandise or raise funds for missions. Eager people insist that Christmas is not a once-a-year affair but a marvelous part of our Christian heritage which should be a continuing possession and experience.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that Christmas is a birthday celebration. It may be that we are far off in our calculation of the anniversary of that unique and blessed event in the lowly manger in a Bethlehem stable, and it is true that not all churches are agreed on December 25, but, in spite of all this, a birthday comes but once a year. The birth of a dear child in my home or yours becomes a change and an ongoing benediction, but we do not make a special observance of the day twice, or thrice, or four times in a year.

Shall we not be aroused to caution, then, when Christmas appears to be in danger of usages other than its one and high purpose, when the day becomes a handy *motif*, when non-Christians "cash in" on the business to be secured with statistical expectation of "seasonal" profits, when we find ourselves treating Christmas as nothing more than a holiday? How Christian is our Christmas?

## The Symbols We Use

Undoubtedly, one of the most fascinating parts of a family Christmas is the decorating of the house for the great day. Theologians of an earlier day condemned much that we now accept as part of our Christmas tradition, although we think we can trace the meaning in most cases. Candles, wreaths, bright stars, holly, mistletoe, the tree glowing with lights—all have stories attached to them which have been related to the coming of the Christ Child or to the spread of his message. There is never any excuse for making any part of Christianity drab and mournful. If these innocent symbols bring to mind some thought of the Savior, they cannot and need not be laboriously analyzed back into the dimness of history to make sure that they were never part of some ancient heathen rite.

There are symbols or decorations, however, which are in poor taste if we wish the home to be dedicated



wholesomely and wholly to the remembrance of the coming of the Son of God into the world. Mistletoe hung conspicuously for an obvious reason is hard to relate to a religious purpose; tinsel-bedecked bottles of intoxicating beverages will never bring the users nearer to God; lavish display without and within the house—often in rivalry with neighbors or friends—is a cheapening of the best the day has to offer; the tendency to allow exaggerated figures of Santa Claus to dominate the scheme of display draws away the thoughts of all from Jesus. (Not that Santa should be denied to our children, but that he should be kept in his place and interpreted as the spirit of generosity which was found so strongly in good Saint Nicholas of old.)

There can be no better central piece for parents and children to construct than a simple manger scene. It should not be far to Bethlehem for family and friends as they view the total effect of a home lovingly prepared for the remembrance of the Christ Child's coming to dwell among men.

### The Stories We Read

Decorations, of course, are not sufficient of themselves to create the complete and best atmosphere for the true appreciation of all that Christmas means. Can we not find the thrills and exaltation of other souls as we turn the pages of books in which we find stories of the season? The Bible is the most wonderful storehouse of Christmas readings. A good beginning is Isaiah 9:2-7, followed by the Magnificat in the first chapter of Luke, the Manger and Shepherd account in the second chapter of Matthew. Other books and stories of a helpful nature include *The Other Wise Man* by Van Dyke, *The Greatest Thing in the World* by Drummond, *A Christmas Carol* by Dickens (and, also, some of his *Christmas Stories*), *The Littlest Angel*, the *Gift of the Magi*. Another short piece worth reviving is the editorial, "Yes, Virginia, There Is a Santa Claus."

Most of these stories are best shared in the evening during that blissful time between dinner and bed: An open fire will add to the glory. If the family is together for several evenings before Christmas many happy moments may be wisely invested, but Christmas Eve should be kept by all means.

### The Songs We Sing

What would our Christmas be without music? We feel sure of the great heavenly chorus as we read the account of the shepherds, for such an event cries out for harmony. Some of the best efforts of musicians and poets have gone into the production of our treasure-trove of carols. The best-loved number not more than a dozen or twenty, but there are some wonderful carols to be found among the less familiar. An adventurous family can discover many such carols with little effort especially in the hymnals featuring music from other lands and add these to their favorites.

It will be well to enlarge our collection of enduring and enriching Christmas music for, as in the mat-



—Religious News Service

Singing carols is another time-honored custom. Encourage the children to sing the Christmas songs that they have learned at church in home worship services too.

ter of decoration, influences are abroad in the world to utilize our precious day for unworthy or, at least, less worthy purposes. In stores our ears are assailed by loud voices shouting such things as "I Caught Mama Kissing Santa Claus," "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town," "All I Want for Christmas," and others even farther away from the spirit of the Only-Begotten Son of God coming to be the Savior. The weeks before Christmas are no longer quiet weeks, for they are filled with recorded music of all kinds geared to the central theme of giving and getting geared into our modern hodge-podge of a diluted Christmas; oftentimes the result can be a desecrated Christmas.

### The Others We Touch

By now, it must be apparent to us that Christmas is not a lonely thing, or a day to be enjoyed in the privacy of one's room, the privacy of one's soul or heart. There can be no gift without a giver and a "getter." The gift of Christmas was and is eternal life for all men. Our celebration of the day after these hundreds of years must take knowledge of that fact and demonstrate it. We know that we have received freely and that we are to give freely. We would give to God the best we have in return for his indescribable gift to us, and the divinely ordained way for a man to give to God is by giving to his fellow man—"inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these my brethren."

Our nearest and dearest come to mind immediately, and we feel such an overwhelming love for



them that we extend ourselves both physically and financially to give them some small indication of what they mean to us. There can be no real giving without sacrifice of some sort. A family Christmas where is heard that oft-maligned expression, "Oh, you shouldn't have!" can be one of the greatest unifying forces of the home. Sheer sacrifice of time, effort, or means cannot fail to ennoble the giver and the receiver.

It would be a sin, of course, to stop with our family or with those within our circle of good friends and neighbors. Christmas is a flat day unless we have done something for someone who had no real reason to expect that we should remember him. There are many in the hospitals on Christmas, there are orphanages filled to overflowing, there are elderly men and women in institutions or in cheerless rooms, there are people who serve us faithfully day after day by delivering the mail or driving the school bus or in other obscure ways which we take for granted, there are so many in other lands whose lives are poor and restricted; all of these could be substitutes standing to receive our earnest gift to God.

We pause for a moment to ask how Christian it is to give chiefly to those from whom we can expect gifts in return, or to give to promoted causes wide of the mark of Christmas, or to give in order that we may be thanked?

### The Memories We Build

At the close of Christmas Day we shall look backward over the Christmases behind us, and the memories will close in. Of all life's memories, the Christmas memories should be the sweetest. Some years ago a teen-age girl (who must be a gracious wife and mother by now) wrote a little poem by the intriguing title of, "The Dynasty of Christmas." This is true: Year after year our lives as Christians are marked by what we find ourselves to be in the manner in which we ponder the great good gift of God. Somehow, Christmas is a mirror to show us what we are.

Christmas must be Christian or it is a hollow mockery. We have some days before us now to strive for the most Christian of all our Christmases in order that we and all men may go back in simple and child-like wonder to the "Little Town of Bethlehem."

—Photo by erb

As the children learn the art of giving and the fun of wrapping packages, are we at the same time teaching them to remember those from whom they will receive no gift?





DEAR SANTA:

It's been many a year since you heard from me. This time my list contains but one gift—not expensive but very important, a package gift that will protect property and possessions, save life itself. The gift that I ask, Santa, is a safe Christmas for myself and my family.

You can help immensely by leaving dangerous toys out of my children's stockings. Anything small enough to be swallowed is not for Teddy, my toddler; or toys that have detachable parts, like animals with removable eyes; toys with sharp points or edges; paints with a lead or poisonous base.

Poorly made playthings that splinter or break into sharp points or edges are not for my three-year-old Brenda; neither should she receive sharp scissors or other cutting toys; electrical or mechanical heat-producing toys; or playthings too big or heavy for her small hands to handle with comfort.

My six-year-old Sammy is not mature enough yet to play with easily overturned mobile toys; or shooting toys that eject sharp-pointed objects; or cap guns with open firing chambers.

Nor can David, my eight-year-old, handle safely mechanical toys with works exposed; shooting or complicated manual toys or sharp-edged tools.

Also please don't bring Carson, my ten-year-old, an air rifle, bow and arrow, or chemistry set.

And dear Santa, please keep in mind that I'm a busy homemaker. I cannot be everywhere at the same time. So please do not put, under our Christmas tree, toys that require adult supervision.

Are you calling me chicken, Santa? To plead my case, let me illustrate with just one hazardous toy—the dart gun. My neighbor's little boy, too young to know its danger, shot his father in the eye. Although the oculist was able to save the sight, it was a painful, costly accident for the father.

Then there was the seven-year-old who found a dart kit among his presents. It contained a small bull's-eye target and 6-inch darts



## *A Letter From Mama*

with heavy steel needles for points. He was having fun throwing darts at the garage door until he struck his pal, Bobby, in the right eye. Bobby lost the sight of that eye. Maybe you won't believe it, Santa, but sometimes we grown-ups hurt ourselves trying out the children's toys, just for fun.

As a special favor then please fill my children's stockings with durable, usable, entertaining, educational toys—the ones that give a child an opportunity to use mind and muscles.

In return, Santa, I promise to do my utmost to make Christmas safe for my family, friends, and neighbors. You don't have to tell me that the hectic holiday season is a breeding ground for accidents. In the year 1957, we had 2,112 accidental deaths in one state, Virginia, like these:

A tree had been put up without water in the container. A bulb exploded. Before the mother could reach her child, sleeping upstairs, the fire was out of control. The baby perished in the flames.

A ten-month-old youngster crawled under a lit tree. The lighting circuit apparently was grounded when the child's head brushed a lighted socket as he touched a radiator. He was electrocuted.

One year in a little Virginia town, a Christmas tree started a fire that raged out of control for 2½ hours. It destroyed \$1,000,-

000 worth of property—post office, bank, business houses. Twelve persons were injured, two died. Twenty-nine families, approximately 70 persons were left homeless.

With these and countless other tragic holiday accidents in mind, surely it behooves me to plan my holiday festivities with thought and care, and to exercise caution while they are in progress.

An important factor in Christmas safety is early preparation. This year, Santa, it will be acts, not talk. If I start to shop early enough, I will have the advantage of some good weather. I can avoid walking in rain, snow or sleet, driving on slippery pavements. Nevertheless, as a precautionary measure, I will have my car overhauled—the brakes, battery, defroster, windshield wipers and tire chains checked.

I will do as much card addressing, gift wrapping, and baking as I can in advance. Which will be a protection against the pressure that hurls at us in the last-minute rush into many accidents. We may have all the units on the range going full blast, handles of saucepans not turned in. This is the time that Johnny is sure to bump against one of the saucepan handles. He scalds himself, and Mama cuts her hand instead of the onion she is trying to mince. Once a doctor told me, Santa, that a knot a surgeon must tie in 3





# Santa Claus

by Browne Sampsell

minutes can be done in 2½—if the surgeon doesn't hurry. I try to keep that in mind when I'm tempted to exceed my speed limit in housework.

Another hazard is the double danger of fire in the season's extra use of electricity and in our lavish use of evergreens. Because they contain two highly flammable substances—pitch and resin—evergreens, burn rapidly. Give the tree a spark and it will burst into flames that can easily get beyond control. So for safety's sake, I will buy the smallest tree that will look nice in my house. I will set it in the coolest spot, away from radiators, open fireplace; in a place where, if it topples over, it will not block an exit.

As long as the tree is indoors, I will keep the container filled with water. For the drier a tree is, Santa, the more likely it is to catch fire. To help it absorb moisture, I will make a slanted cut across the base.

Of course, Santa, I will check the tree light bulbs with care; replace worn insulation and frayed cords. All my electrical decorations will have the seal of the Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc. This seal is my guarantee that the item has been tested for safety.

I won't trust to luck, Santa, that no one will trip over a trailing cord. I will tape the cord to the baseboard. And I will see that the tree is far enough away

from plugs and switches to protect it from possible sparks.

We want our tree to last until New Year's Day, so, we do not put it up until Christmas Eve. Then, we trim it in time for you to enjoy, Santa, on your traditional visit. Much as we delight in candlelight, we keep candles off and away from the tree. We use neither paper nor cotton decorations. Breakable ornaments go on the higher branches, out of the reach of the children and pets. Plastics and other unbreakables find a place on the lower branches.

I make sure, Santa, that no electrical ornament is in contact with tinsel or metal or foil. TV sets, electric trains, and other electrical items are not allowed near the tree. If we go out for the evening, I turn off the tree lights. Also before we go to bed, they are turned off. Every day I check the tree needles. If I find any turning brown, I remove lights from that area.

On our outside tree, the head of the house uses weatherproof cord and lights. He puts the power cord running from the house overhead out of the way, insulates it to avoid shorting. Branches that support the cord, he pads, so the insulation won't wear away. He hangs outdoor lights with sockets down so they will not collect water, and disconnects the cord before he does any repairing.

The kitchen is a favorable place for holiday accidents, Santa, espe-

cially if a few children are around. With all the extra cooking and baking to do, it is easy to forget to turn the handles of saucepans in; to put the sharp knife away in the drawer; to close cabinet doors and drawers; to mop up spills immediately. If Mama bypasses doing such things, she is likely to have a crop of small fry accidents, cuts, bruises, burns, or she may be the accident victim herself, like my neighbor who fell off a makeshift stool and broke her arm and collarbone.

To avoid having so many pots boiling at one time, I will prepare all the food that I possibly can ahead of the time when needed. With the help of my deep freeze that is a lot. Also I can do all the cleaning possible in advance, which will enable me to do last-minute dinner details in a leisurely fashion. This will not only protect me from accidents but will enable me to eat a Christmas dinner without being too tired to get the maximum enjoyment out of it.

We want also, Santa, to live happily after the holidays are over. So we handle the disposal detail with promptness and caution. After the gifts are unwrapped, we burn discarded wrappings in an outside trash can. As soon as our tree starts shedding needles, we put it out for garbage collection, even though the season may not be quite over. If there is no garbage collection, we burn the tree in an open space, keeping the fire extinguisher handy, ready for possible use.

Next, I destroy all flammable decorations. The others have their special storage place, readily accessible next December. In the meantime, they are safe from small hands and mice.

If we use foresight and caution, I know Santa that we can have a gala holiday without even a minor mishap. I know also that only an accident-free holiday can be a really merry Christmas for me and my family.

You'll be sure to remember about the toys, won't you?

With a tree-load of love,  
Every Child's Mama



## Purpose:

To help families realize the values of formal family worship led by the father and to plan to have such worship during the Christmas season.

## Preparation:

1. If your parents' group usually has only a few fathers in attendance, it is essential that you strongly promote their coming to this meeting. The purpose of the meeting is not likely to be served if only the mother comes. See suggestions on the opposite page. Ask those planning to come to bring their copies of *Hearthstone*.

2. Well in advance, contact three men who will serve as panelists for the discussion and give them the discussion questions. Caution them that they are to inspire fathers present, not place guilt on any who have abdicated their spiritual responsibilities in the home.

3. If you are using the filmstrip, preview it and plan how you will introduce and use it. Ask your projectionist to have the screen in place and the projector focused before the people begin arriving on the meeting night.

4. If you plan to use Step Three (A), work with a family in preparing a formal Christmas worship service led by the father.

5. If you plan to use Step Three (B), on the meeting night have sharpened pencils, paper, Bibles, hymnals, December issues of the *Bethany Guide* and other worship resources ready for use by the small planning groups.

## Fellowship Period:

By prearrangement, have at least one couple serving as host and hostess. They will greet arrivals and introduce them into conversational groups. Name tags may be helpful. Five minutes before the announced meeting time, start a ten-minute song session.

## Conducting the Meeting:

*Step One:* Have a Rabbi describe the celebration of *Hanukkah* or use the filmstrip *The Story of Hanukkah* or have a prepared

## Two meeting plans for parents' classes and discussion groups.



# 1. The Family Worship

## at Christmas

by Mrs. Jay W. Jones

reader read aloud the *Hanukkah* portion of article "Toward a Happier Christmas," adding pertinent details from some of the suggested resources.

*Step Two:* Panel discussion. Questions: (1) Do you feel that, when Jesus applied the title "Father" to God, he placed Christian fathers under any particular obligation of spiritual leadership? (2) What effects upon the children might occur as the result of experiences in father-led worship? (3) The Jewish religious family celebrations, including *Hanukkah*, are exactly the same year after year. Do you feel there would be value in a Christian family having formal worship which would be repeated each time the proper occasions recurred?

Establish a friendly atmosphere that will encourage questioners from the parent's group to enter into the discussion. Do not try to keep the meeting to a formal panel format, on the contrary, the more the entire group enters into the discussion, the more they will be getting out of it. The panelists will then become prepared "pump primers" for the discussion. As moderator, it is your responsibility to see that the discussion does not last longer than about fifteen minutes. If you are running overtime, omit the third question.

*Step Three:* Do one of the following: (A) Divide into small groups, preferably, four to six persons each. Ask each group to plan a detailed formal family Christmas worship service to be led by the father, using the "Family Worship" section of *Hearthstone* and the resource materials

which you have provided. Allow about twenty minutes, then let each group share its plans with the others. (B) Have a family present a formal Christmas worship. (You may wish to have mimeographed copies of this worship to distribute to the group.) Ask the group to contribute other ideas which might be used for a worship of this type.

## Conclusion:

Summarize, briefly restating consensus of panelists, indicating variety of themes possible for formal family worship at Christmas. Express hope that those participating have found enrichment for their families' spiritual experience.

## Resources:

### BOOKS

*A Pictorial Treasury of Jewish Holidays and Customs* by Morris Epstein. Ktaz Publishing Company, \$4.95

*A Treasury of Jewish Holidays* by Hyman E. Goldin. Twayne Publishers, \$3.75

### PAMPHLETS

*Your Neighbor Celebrates* by Rabbi Arthur Gilbert and Oscar Tarcov. Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 515 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y., 25 cents.

### AUDIO-VISUAL

*The Story of Hanukkah*. Filmstrip, 31 frames, black and white, silent with script. Available from the Regional Offices of Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 515 Madison Avenue, New York 25, N. Y.





## 2.

# Christmas From Others

### Purpose:

To help families increase their understanding of the basic unity of Christians through using Christmas customs from other countries in their own home celebrations.

### Suggestion to Program Leader:

This meeting should be held as early as possible so as to allow families time to plan on using ideas from it. Any one of the first three steps in the meeting plan could be omitted.

### Preparation for the Meeting:

Publicize in adult church school classes, in the newsletter, and on posters. If possible, mail invitations to parents or have them telephoned. Arrange for care of children during the meeting. Urge those planning to come to read the article "Toward a Happier Christmas."

### Conducting the Meeting:

**Step One:** Have on display decorations from other countries which were previously made for this purpose by the Junior and/or Chi Rho Fellowship. These might include: (1) a tree decorated with paper doves (Germany), angels (Poland), and "Jul-isse," (Denmark). Directions for these are in *The Complete Christmas Book*. (2) A Crèche with hillside setting (France). (3) Kissing Ring (England). (4) A piñata made from a large flower pot, decorated with colored papers (Mexico).

**Step Two:** Begin with a short fellowship period. Serve wassail and traditional foreign Christmas cookies.<sup>1</sup> Have recipes available. See the opposite page for other suggestions.

**Step Three:** Have your choir director point out which of our familiar Christmas songs are from

other lands (Most of them are!) and sing one or two of them.

**Step Four:** Share the purpose of the meeting with the group. Remind them to make sure that their children understand the essential unity of the church and of being "Christians only but not the only Christians." Point out the possibilities of using Christmas customs from around the world as a means of educating children in this tenet.

**Step Five:** Have at least three people report on customs which would be meaningful and appropriate for the three major age groups: preschool, children, and teen-age. It is essential that these reporters have had access to resource books, and have chosen customs which they wish to recommend to the group. Those in the article "Toward a Happier Christmas" were selected to fall into three basic categories: nativity scenes, Christmas fires, and gift-giving. The reporters will find a wealth of others from which to choose.

**Step Six:** Ask your group to suggest ways that parents might use some of the ideas presented and talk with children of various ages, leading them to understand how Christians of all colors and creeds are united in their basic beliefs even though their means of expressing those beliefs are varied.

### Conclusion:

Sing the first and last verses of "Joy to the World!" Prayer: Petition in your own words that the purpose of the meeting will be fulfilled in the homes represented.

### Resources:

#### Books

*The Complete Christmas Book* Franklin Watts, Editor. Franklin Watts, \$4.95  
*Christmas Customs Around the World* by Herbert H. Wernecke. The Westminster Press, \$3.50

*Let's Celebrate Christmas* by Horace J. Gardner. A. S. Barnes, 1940  
*All About Christmas* by Maymie R. Krythe. Harper and Brothers, \$2.75  
*It's Time for Christmas* by Sechrist and Woolsey. Macrae Smith Co., \$3.75

### ARTICLES

Ask at the public library for: *House Beautiful*, December, 1959, "How to Bring the Wassail Bowl Up to Date" or use recipe which follows. *House and Garden*, November, 1959, "Traditional Swedish Cookies."

#### WASSAIL BOWL

12 qts. sweet cider  
 6 sticks of cinnamon  
 4 tsp. whole cloves  
 1 tsp. ground nutmeg  
 1½ cups sugar  
 6 small unpeeled, roasted apples

Mix all ingredients but apples. Bring to a boil. Put in preheated serving bowl. At last minute, add hot apples whole (Do not omit the apples as they are the mark of Wassail. Without them, you have only a spiced punch). Keep hot while serving. Serves 50.

### Hearthstone's Program

#### Articles for 1962

The following is a list of article topics projected for 1962. The titles are subject to change but are reliable for general planning.

January—Our Changing American Culture

The New World Community

February—God Made Them, Too!  
 How Do They Learn What's Right?

March—Maturing in Christian Faith  
 Church Care for Your Children

April—What Can You Expect from the Church School?

The Family Is Stewardship

May—Beyond Marriage and Parenthood

You and World Population Pressures

June—Make Good Use of Your Community!

Christian Concepts of Discipline

July—Family Fun in Summer

August—Social Drinking and Family Living

September—Schools of Tomorrow for Today

Is College for Everyone?

October—Rough Spots in Family Living

Are Two Parents Necessary?

November—Families in a War Threatened World

Can Spiritual Values Be Taught?

December—Creating a Security Climate in the Family

Try These This Christmas

<sup>1</sup>See recipe under "Resources."





# 1. Using Christmas Stories at Home

Two meeting plans for parents' classes or discussion groups based on the article, "A Christian Celebration of Christmas!" page 19.

## Purpose of Meeting

To point up the values in utilizing literature (both sacred and secular) for the creation of a Christian Christmas atmosphere in the home.

## Preparation for Meeting

The leader is the key to the success of the meeting, but he may call to his assistance the talents and energies of others who serve on committees or who can be induced to volunteer. It is essential that the leader "feel" the surge of the season and the best way for him or her to achieve this is by steeping the mind and heart in the best stories to be suggested.

Copies of December 1960 *Hearthstone* will be needed by all who are to share in the program, and the article "A Christian Celebration of Christmas," page 19, will be basic material.

The one who is to conduct the meeting may select two or three others to help in the search for good Christmas stories. A committee meeting for the purpose of selecting the best from the many stories found is indicated; also, a mimeographed list of *all* good and usable stories might be prepared for distribution to all who attend the meeting.

Invite parents who are not accustomed to attending this group to share this and the other meetings this month.

## Conducting the Meeting

This Christmas meeting deserves, perhaps, a little extra by way of effort and expense. A mimeographed order of service made up in green or red ink would be appropriate. (If this is a four-page edition the list of stories could be included for later reference.)

The worship service will present no difficulties except that of being conventional. Done by candlelight and with each participant prepared to take part

from memory, a service will be meaningful. A Call to Worship from the Old Testament (such as, "Unto us a Child is born"), an Invocation, singing of a medley of carols without using hymnals, a recited Scripture from Matthew or Luke, and a round of sentence prayers will make up a worthy introduction to the theme.

In the opening moments following the worship, the leader may speak briefly about the wonder of stories, tying this in with the wonder of Christmas and, then, explain what he hopes to accomplish through the topic.

Following the introduction, a chalkboard may be disclosed with the slate divided by a line down the middle with one section headed "Familiar," and the other, "Unfamiliar." Then, in turn, the people taking part in the service will read portions of stories. As each reading is finished, the group will be asked to identify the story. If someone can identify the story, its title will be listed under "Familiar" on the chalkboard; if no one is able to identify the story, its title will be set down under "Unfamiliar." This will go on until all of the stories selected by the committee have been sampled. There is little doubt that the New Testament accounts of Jesus' birth, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Other Wise Man*, and a few others will be spotted, but, if the committee has done a good job, there will be many good stories which seem not to be used often. At this point, the group will be asked to select one of the less familiar stories to be read in its entirety. Choose one in the group to do the reading.

## Questions for Discussion

1. For family use at Christmastime, how do stories rate as compared to singing, poems, articles, or editorials? What particular contribution does a

story make that is not to be found in any other vehicle? (Here may be brought in the custom of Jesus of using stories—Parables—in his preaching, and how we remember the illustration in a sermon long after the rest is forgotten.)

2. What other stories should we add to either side of the chalkboard listings? (The one suggesting a story may be invited to give a brief synopsis of it and say why it appeals to him.) If the new titles are not on the mimeographed list, they should be added.

3. When and how shall we use these stories? (Reading aloud in a family group, passing the book from one to another in such a group that all may take a turn in reading, each one reading silently in a quiet spot, recording the story for playing back—these are some methods. *When* to use these stories could include breakfast time, early evening, bedtime.)

4. By taking a vote, the most familiar—or at least the favorite story—could be found. Discuss, why is this story so good for a Christian Christmas?

## Resource Material

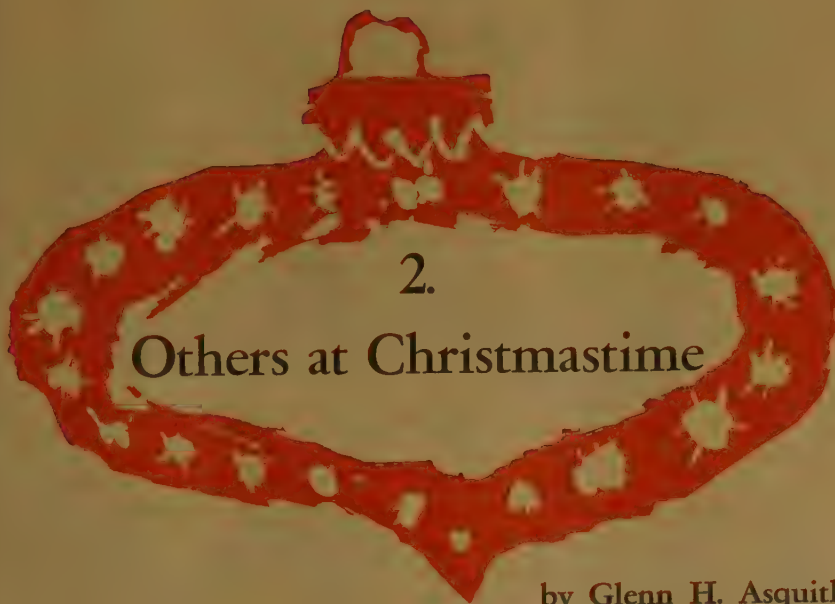
Cynthia Pearl Maus, *Christ and the Fine Arts, The World's Great Madonnas, The Church and the Fine Arts*, Harper and Brothers, New York, \$5.95.

Charles Wallis, ed., *Worship Resources for the Christian Year*, Harper and Brothers, 1954, \$4.95.

Charles Dickens, *Christmas Stories*, available from different publishers, \$1.75 to \$3.50.

*Christmas Ideals* (for as many years as can be found available), Ideals Publishing Company, Milwaukee, \$1.50 each.

*The Christmas Annual* (published yearly), Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, paper \$1.50 each.



2.

## Others at Christmastime

by Glenn H. Asquith

### Purpose of Meeting

To come to some conclusions regarding the comparative place of self-and-family and others in a Christian Christmas.

### Preparation for Meeting

*The Leader* will first take stock of his or her own practice in regard to others at Christmas; will bring from memory the practices in his childhood home and try to think back to some deeds of his grandparents in this regard, will check with friends concerning their emphases. All of this, combined with some earnest prayer, will fit the leader for such an important topic.

*The Helpers.* One could be asked to assemble the worship materials and draw up a service, assigning parts to others if he wishes; another could make a list of all "others" within the responsibility range of the meeting; another could enlist from three to five members of the group to act as a Sounding Board (see below).

*The Materials.* The current *Hearthstone* is invaluable as a tool; mimeographed sheets for the worship service and any other necessary guides.

### Conducting the Meeting

*First the Worship Period.* A brief piano prelude, a call to worship (suggested: one stanza from the hymn, "No Man Is an Island," or the scripture verse, "How Pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," or "If you love them that love you, what thank have you?"), an invocation, a hymn or two on the general theme of brotherhood, and one carol, a prayer by the devotional leader, a selected scripture (a part of John 17 would be good).

At this point, the Sounding Board will be asked to take places in the front

facing the audience. The leader will put questions to the members of the Sounding Board such as the following:

1. To whom will you give Christmas gifts this year as you see it at this moment?

2. During the Christmas season, whom do you plan to visit?

3. At a rough estimate, what proportion of your Christmastime and money will go to immediate family and what proportion to others outside the charmed circle?

4. If you must *force* yourself to do things at Christmas for other people who have done nothing for you, can you do them any good?

Then the leader might put this question to the audience, "Have the members of the Sounding Board come to conclusions which represent the average custom in use among us? (This will lead naturally into the next part of the meeting.)"

### Questions for Discussion

1. As the leader names the people in the Christmas story, the audience will be asked to name what each gave: the landlord (the use of the manger), Joseph (faith and trust in God), Mary (comfort and ease), the angels (praise), the shepherds (time and neglect of their only source of livelihood), the wise men (gold, frankincense, myrrh).

2. Who, not mentioned, gave the greatest gift of all? (God—his Only-Begotten Son).

3. Can Christmas be truly kept without giving something to God in return for the joy and peace of Christmas? How can we give to God?

4. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, do we find any sort of test as to who the "others" are whom we should

include in our Christmas ministrations? What happens to our Christmas if we remember only the nice, clean "priest and Levite type" of people whom we know?

5. Whom would you include in a possible list of "others" who may need us at Christmastime? (Write the answers on a chalkboard.)

6. Do "others" need our gifts, chiefly, or do they need some part of us in time and attention? Are we justified in "spoiling" our children's Christmas by inviting tiresome people in for a visit or a meal—perhaps strangers?

7. What about anonymity in making gifts to others?

8. Can people of limited means who have difficulty in providing a modest Christmas for the family do anything at all for others? (What about cards, notes, telephone calls, brief calls in homes or institutions, prayer lists, a "Merry Christmas" said at the right time?)

### Some Conclusions

With the information and opinions now given, the Sounding Board might be asked to answer again the questions given by the leader earlier to see whether or not there will be changes made this year as a result of the discussion.

At this closing moment, the group might decide upon some "others" who come into the responsibility and privilege zone of the group, and make plans to do something for them at Christmas.

### Resource Materials

A Bible Concordance listing passages involving service and love to "others."

Henry Drummond, *The Greatest Thing in the World*, available from a number of publishers for \$1.00.

A list of community institutions and services (such as hospitals).

### Biblegram Solution

(See Biblegram on page 3)

"Make me to know thy ways, O LORD;

teach me thy paths.

Lead me in thy truth, and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation;

for thee I wait all the day long" (Ps. 25:4-5).

### The Words

A Tattle	L Fourth
B Wheat	M Tamed
C Healthy	N Famine
D Mother	O Tomato
E Hooley	P Throw
F Liked	Q Measly
G Canary	R Danger
H Potato	S Swim
I Hatch	T Event
J Husky	U Fool
K Light	V Dandy



## "The Hollow of His Hand"

(Continued from page 9)

himself to a lonely baptism, with no family, and no new cloth. How glad she was that Probha, the village nurse, had suggested this to her!

A few hours later, over the midday rice meal, the Lees asked him what his plans were.

"I have sent a *chokra* (small boy) to tell my parents and wife. They did not know that I was planning to do this thing when I came on Saturday. They did not know, of course, that today is Easter Sunday. How wonderful that I could have been baptized on such a day!

"I shall go home tomorrow, Sahib. Perhaps by then their wrath will have quieted. Though I am now an outcaste in their Hindu eyes, I still want to be a good son, loving husband, and father."

"Hari," Sally protested, "what if they carry out their threats?"

A shadow darkened his calm face briefly. "Our Lord did not evade persecution, nor did his disciples. I must begin my Christian life with faith that God will not forsake me!

"My father is very feeble, Sahib. Your medicine did much to help him, and he sent warm thanks to you, secretly. But he is an old man, and I know he cannot live long. I must be there, stand beside him, when he goes!"

It had been a very long week! Sally thought. She would be so relieved when the cough sounded on the veranda. She would smile as usual at Hari's way of knocking. He would enter with his bundle of clothing, and play happily with children, while she counted the laundry. It's a good thing Saturday night is finally here, she thought grimly. The suspense is too much to bear!

Dusk came, but no Hari Padma. Darkness fell and a jackal howled wildly. Sally shivered a bit, and put on a record. The soft strains of "Clair de Lune" pushed back the nearby jungle . . . but not her thoughts!

"Darling, you're not a very good actress. I know you are terribly worried about Hari. Will it help to know that the church committee voted to send a delegation of men tomorrow to make sure he is all right?" John's steady voice seemed to banish all her fears.

"Oh, yes, John. How brave of the elders! I heard that they were fearful of enmity and riot between the two villages because of the baptism." Sally and John went upstairs feeling that tomorrow must end this agony of suspense.

"Sahib, it seems long since I have seen you." Hari winced as John bathed the cuts and bruises, and put sulfa in the worst of them. He con-

tinued happily, "I have felt all through this that I was kept in the hollow of God's hand. Your coming today seems all part of his plan."

"Can you tell us all about it, Hari?" urged one of the Bhimpore men.

"Just as I planned, the messenger had arrived the day before, to tell of my baptism. When I entered the house, I saw immediately that my father lay very ill. Before I could go to him, my wife and mother rushed at me with clubs. I had vowed not to run away this time. And, of course, I could not defend myself.

"They struck me until I lost consciousness. A blackness came before my eyes, like a curtain, and I knew that another blow would mean death. Even now I can hear Ma shouting, 'You are not my son. You Christian dog, outcaste! I have no son!'

"Even in the darkness that swept over me, I could hear my wife sobbing, while she struck at me. I thought nothing could save me from death, but two days later, I awakened. Someone had dragged me to the pond, and I lay beside the big stone where I had pounded clothes for so many years. I was alive! But I was so weak I could hardly stand."

"Couldn't you have sent someone to Bhimpore for help?" John questioned.

"No one in the village would speak to me, I soon learned. The boys with whom I had played as a child, would not meet my eyes. No one would grant me shelter or a morsel of food. All of them said that I had brought disgrace to the village.

"On the fourth day, I went to our house. I had decided to face them again, no matter what my fate. I had to know if my father was well!"

His voice trembled with emotion as he continued, "I entered the house quietly, but boldly. There seemed to be no one about. I found my 'baba' lying on his rope-strung bed in a darkened room. As I bent over him, his eyes lit up with a glad smile. His words were few, sir, but I shall never forget them. He said, 'You have been a good son. All that any man could want. Farewell. May your Christian God bless you.' And thus he died, smiling into my eyes.

"I wiped away my tears, and thought suddenly of my Bible. I hurried to its hiding place. I had just taken it out when loud cries came from the house. I knew my mother had come back. I hastened to conceal the Bible in my tattered clothing, but it was too late. She had seen me."

A village elder took up the tale with a grave air.

"Sir, it is true that this is a Hindu village, and we are proud of it. We deplored Hari's becoming a Christian. But we are not murderers! As we heard the widow's screams, we knew that old Rajen Babu had departed from his earth. Many of us hurried there to be of help. We found her,

however, not mourning a dead husband as is rightful, but beating her son again. As I came up close, she tore the book from him, and threw it to me.

"'Cast it into the fire!' she screamed. 'It is this book which has brought evil days on us!'

"I looked at the book, the frenzied woman, and her son. He stood there, not even trying to protect his head from the rain of blows. In that moment, I stopped the shameful scene. I am village headman, head of the *panchayat* (council of five), and my word is law.

"I spoke plainly and sternly to this screaming widow: Hari has been a good son to you. He has not taken the family's money and gambled it on cock fights. He has never gotten drunk on rice beer as other men do. He has worked faithfully to feed this family.

"As for this book, I shall keep it in my house and guard it for Hari until he is well enough to defend it. How can a book be evil if it makes a better man of Hari than the rest of us?"

Hari took up the story, "My wife came to see me later that day, and begged forgiveness. She says that though she cannot yet see her way to becoming a Christian, she will consent to let Ram, our elder boy, go to the mission school. That is a great concession, Sahib, for she is sure that if he goes to that school, he will be a more stubborn Christian than his father!"

With swollen face, he grinned happily at the headman; "Each evening when the lamps are lit, and I can no longer iron, I go to this man's house. He wants to hear these scriptures that made me willing to face death. Each evening a silent crowd gathers to hear me read. They like to hear especially the stories that Jesus told to crowds long ago."

"What of your mother, Hari? Do you think there is anything we can do to help her understand all this?" John asked.

Sadness twisted the bruised face grotesquely. "Something in Ma died when my father's body became ashes in the burning rites. She has not spoken since that hour. There is no venom in her now. Only pain and anguish. She has worshiped hundreds of gods all her life. However, they are empty gods, with clay feet.

"Under Indian law, at my father's death, the land and house became mine. I have assured Ma of my unchanged affection. I have told her that she will be respected as mother and grandmother, still. But with her husband's death, her spirit died, too."

Hari straightened up briskly. "I thank you all for coming to make sure I was all right. As you can see, I am fine. Now I must get back to work." "I've got to get that laundry to Bhimpore soon, or the Mem sahib won't let me help trim the Christmas tree this year! *Namaskar, sir!*"



# family Counselor

I have an only child to raise!

**Q** WE WERE married five years before the dreamed reality of a little child entered our home. She is now two years and four months old. Since I continue to have trouble, I often wonder if she will ever have a playmate. I try to get all the information I can on rearing an only child. I am of the firm belief, regardless of people's opinion, with the right effort put forth for that child's welfare, it can be done.

We live on a farm and do little neighboring except by special effort on my part. My husband doesn't believe in being too involved with any particular friend, but he is well liked by everyone he comes in contact with. Child rearing doesn't concern or bother him, as it does me, which is natural, I guess. We attend church and Sunday church school in town and go to town quite frequently. I make a special effort to have a trained baby sitter to care for our daughter while I am in town. I am trying to prepare myself early for her future growth.

There has often been a question in my mind about what other children's activities there could be that would interest the few neighborhood children (which are mostly older) or if I should leave well enough alone. I must admit my daughter seems to get along fine with other children. She has a natural tendency of not wanting to give in.

Since I take our hired man's (neighbor to us) children (twins,

age seven) to school, she sees them at those times. We have so little in common with them, on account of our beliefs. They do not go to any church and live quite differently. We get along all right just this way, as our neighbors are very reliable. They also have a little boy just two years old.

What help is available for guiding me in raising my only child?

**A** YOU ARE right, of course, in your feeling that an only child can be brought up by wise parents in such a way that she will not suffer materially from the fact that she is an only child. However, you also realize, I am sure, that the parents will need to make a conscious effort to supply this only child with the kind of experiences that will make her feel at home with other children, and that will keep her from becoming completely self-centered. In other words, it is so much easier to "spoil" an only child than to spoil several children.

Your concern, therefore, that your two-and-a-half-year-old, in the years ahead, shall have happy experiences with other children is quite proper. The seven-year-old twins of the man who works for you on the farm are a bit too old to provide very happy or constructive experiences for your

child.

I am wondering, however, if there is any reason why you should not have the two-year-old boy in your home rather frequently. He and your daughter should be able to have many happy experiences together. And even though your two families do not have much in common, this fact should not be permitted to keep the two children apart. In fact, as they play together their experiences may provide you and their parents with a common interest and thus be beneficial to you and to them.

You will be wise, too, to make contact with other neighbors who have small children, so that your daughter may visit them and their children visit you. This will require effort on your part and your husband may not be too enthusiastic over the idea, but it is up to you to help him see that for the sake of your child, these contacts should be made. Remember, that right now when your child is two and a half, she is not as likely to play *with* other children, as to enjoy playing *beside* them. But it will not be long until she will learn to know what it means to take turns and to share with others; such learnings will not always be easy, however, so she and her playmates will need your careful guidance.

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## Mother's Christmas Present

(Continued from page 18)

house, four excited children watched her go. Doris had asked if Sally couldn't sit up a little later than her regular bedtime. At the door Mother turned and said, "I'd rather stay at home with this nice family." Jimmy put his hand over his mouth to hide a snicker.

It was a very successful meeting. Mother was chosen as the Dinner-getting Committee, and was to do nothing else. Glenn was made Decorating Committee because he was the tallest. Jimmy offered to be the Dinner-dishes Committee. They decided that Sally could crayon some place cards. "I guess I'll be the General-helpers Committee, taking care of Sally, and doing anything that needs to be done," said Doris.

"That's the Christmas spirit!" said Dad smiling.

Christmas morning Mother started to get out of bed, but Dad gently pushed her back. "No, Mrs. Thomas! We are getting breakfast today, and you are not to come downstairs until you hear us singing."

In about twenty minutes, loud strains of "Joy to the World" came from the kitchen to call Mother to a breakfast she hadn't had to cook. After breakfast and family devotions, the family opened their presents. Then while Jimmy did the breakfast dishes, Doris took care of Sally and Mother busied herself about the dinner. When it was ready, Glenn carried some turkey and plum pudding to the family across the street who had just come from Europe.

When it was time for dessert, Mother started to get up. "Sit down!" Dad ordered her with a laugh. "Doris will bring in the dessert, and Glenn and I will carry out the dirty dishes."

"And scrape them?" asked Jimmy, a little worried.

"Yes, scrape them for the superfine dishwasher we have today," Dad assured him with a grin.

The telephone rang several times. First it was for Doris. She looked disgusted when she came back. "Imagine anyone asking me to baby-sit on Christmas! They should take care of their own kids like you and Dad do," she said to her mother.

Then Glenn was called. They heard him say, "Nothing doing today. I can have more fun at home."

At the table they played the old game "I went to my Grandmother's for Christmas dinner, and I had—." Each one added something else to what had been said before. They let Sally play by asking her, "What did you have for dinner, Sally?" After dinner, Mother and Sally were banished to the living room. Mother read Sally's new books, but that was a vacation from clearing up.

One of Jimmy's presents had been

a pair of ice skates. He could hardly wait to try them out as soon as he had finished the dishes. But when Sally asked, "Who's going to give me a ride on my new sled?" he couldn't refuse her. None of the other boys had as cute a kid sister as Sally.

Later in the afternoon they acted out the Christmas story with Mother and Dad taking the parts of Mary and Joseph. They sang all the Christmas carols they knew, and tried some new ones.

At supper Sally said, "Jimmy gave me a lovely sled ride." And Mother added, "Everyone of you gave me the loveliest Christmas presents you ever gave before."

"That's because giving ourselves is the best gift," said Dad quietly. "It's a costly treasure like those the wise men brought."

"Let's sing that!" said Jimmy. So the whole family stood up, took hold of hands, and sang, "As with Gladness Men of Old." They had never had a happier Christmas!

## As Old Codes Crack

(Continued from page 11)

do no good. We must help teen-agers know what to read as well as what not to read. We must encourage the reading of great and noble books about inspiring and triumphant lives. To read occasionally aloud from such books is one helpful device. To talk together at the table about them is another.

Our young people need answers to their moral questions, not mere prohibitions. What are the harmful effects of tobacco? What are the dangers in alcohol? What differing effects do they have on the human system? Is the use of these stimulants sinful?

Christian parents need to be perfectly honest with their young people. They need to acknowledge that in certain places and among some wholesome people the use of these stimulants in moderation is not considered inconsistent with Christian character and service. There is no specific biblical injunction against their use. There are biblical principles, however, that might lead us to abstain, either for our own highest good or for the good of others. These are questions of conscience for which every individual Christian is responsible to his Master. No man has the right to judge another in these and kindred areas.

We should help our young people to see the relation between body, soul, and spirit in the human personality and the hierarchy of values in God's design for human life. The body is the honored servant of the mind. The senses minister to knowledge and to pleasure. The body and mind should both serve the spirit. The spirit should be related to God in Christ as Lord and Saviour of life.

Here is the basic principle. Here is the basic question. What is dominant? What ministers to the highest aspirations in our lives? What injures, weakens, defeats the Spirit of God in our lives?

And so, with dancing, the theatre, card-playing, and other amusements often selected as taboos. Some Christians have set up these activities as shibboleths, standards for judging one neighbor's piety or lack of it, actions in which they think no truly spiritual Christian may engage. Here again we must distinguish between the harmful and the non-harmful. Can we make final judgments that these are wholly wrong and always harmful?

Some dancing, some drama, and some card-playing may be perfectly consistent with Christian principles and Christian living. It is easy to pass sweeping condemnations. This will not satisfy, however, the inquiring young mind. Why are these things wrong? Are they always or under all conditions wrong? What wrongs can they lead to? When may they be helpful?

While helping our teen-agers with other matters that effect what they become as moral beings, we must not neglect the matter of sex. Sex is a dominant theme in our time. Our teen-agers know that God created his children, male and female. We need to help the young people understand why God did this and what he wants his children to do about it. What kinds of relations between the sexes are wholesome and redemptive? What kinds are evil and defiling?

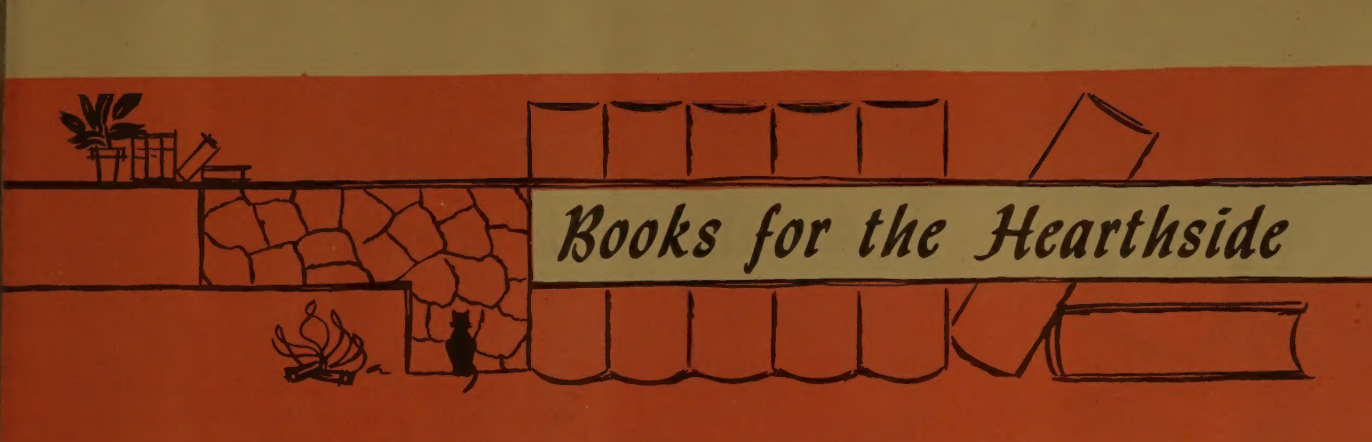
Here, in this area of human relations there are specific biblical teachings. Our young people need to be shown that God has set down certain rules and principles, not to fence us out from happiness and joy, but to fence our happiness in. Perversions of his will in these matters can only destroy our true happiness.

There is a biblical philosophy of pleasure. Our young people need to be helped to discover that God is not "the Great Forbinder." God is a father who loves us and seeks only our highest good and our ultimate happiness. He forbids nothing but what is harmful to our spiritual well-being.

No one of us knows enough to answer all the questions that beset parents in our time. Families and situations differ. Rules cannot be laid down for all. The eternal principles of honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love set forth by our Saviour in the Manifesto of His Kingdom still stand, and they will constantly challenge the Christian disciple to shape his life after the pattern suggested in Jesus' teaching and demonstrated by his life.

If we can lead our young people to a passionate devotion to him who loved us and gave himself for us, then we will not need to fear the pressures of the unwholesome and defiling temptations all about them as old codes crack.





## Books for the Hearthside

### For Young People

**The Tinker's Armor** by Gladys H. Barr (Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1961, 168 pages, \$2.50) is the biography of John Bunyan, a 16th century Englishman who becomes a fighter for political and religious freedom. Written for young teens and mid-teens, this is an excellent book. Young John is influenced by his grandfather who hopes that the English may someday be free. John goes to school to learn to read and write. At sixteen, he joins the forces of Oliver Cromwell in the attempt to overthrow the English crown. After the war, John marries and becomes a Christian minister. The law catches up with him, and he is imprisoned. During his long years in jail, he begins to write. His most famous work is still read by young people today as they enjoy *The Pilgrim's Progress*.—A. H.

Generally, **With the Will to Go** (Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1960, 244 pages, \$3.75) by Agnes Danforth Hewes is interesting and exciting, but there are times when it drags. Some very unique and valuable ideas are sprinkled throughout. The fact that Pieter's loyalty and conscientiousness about keeping his word leads him and others into a profitable adventure for not only themselves, but for the Netherlands as well, is an interesting turn of events. Even though, at first, there seemed to be only signs of peril, it is well that the risks he finally takes are not known to all his elders. The book is filled with the desire for adventure and accomplishment, but, best of all, the desire is not purely selfish.—C. A.

**Shadow on Devil's Peak** (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1961, 205 pages, \$2.95) is a girls' sports novel written by Amelia E. Walden, a well-known writer of stories for young and mid-teen girls. Placed in the romantic setting of a New England ski resort, the story portrays a 21-year-old girl who interviews celebrities for a New York magazine. Trudi Bancroft excels in trail skiing, which helps her solve the mystery of Devil's Peak. Beyond the action of the mystery is Trudi's struggle against a painful past and a childhood fear.—A. H.

### For Children

Helen Topping Miller has continued the series of fictional Christmas vignettes about famous persons in America's past. Her latest offering is **Christmas at Sagamore Hill with Theodore Roosevelt** (Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1960, 56 pages, \$2.50). In her usual style, she presents history along with the facts and fiction of the occasion of Christmas 1898 in the Theodore Roosevelt home.

The Black Forest of Germany, hundreds of years ago, is the setting for the story of **The First Christmas Tree** (Ives Washburn, Inc., New York, 1961, unpagged, \$2.95) by Hertha Pauli. Here is a story within a story, different and appealing. Peter and Marie are anxiously awaiting their father who has gone for the firewood needed for finishing the pot of fish chowder for their Christmas Eve supper. After an eternity of straining, watchful eyes, their father appears with a whole, chopped tree! Supper is interrupted by a knock on the door. A little stranger appears—cold, tired, hungry, clad in rags. Grateful for the hospitality, the little stranger tells a story of the little black spruce tree and the Christ Child to show his appreciation of the love shown to him.

The red and green illustrations enliven the book and enhance the story. They were drawn by Kurt Werth, whom some readers will remember as the artist for Phyllis McGinley's book, *The Year There Was No Santa Claus*.

### For Adults

We remember, or enjoy hearing, of the old-fashioned Christmases that included the bobsled, sleigh bells, the horse drawing up to the hitching post, the gathering of the parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and the big Christmas dinner. **Prairie Christmas** (Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1960, 51 pages, \$2.50) by Paul Engle reiterates for us such never to be forgotten Christmases.

The delightful book on life in the parsonage is now presented in paperback (in case you missed out on the hard-back) entitled **Papa Was a Preacher** (Abingdon Press, Nashville,

Tennessee, 1944, 167 pages, \$1) and written by Alyene Porter, the youngest daughter in the family. Humor is evident throughout the book. When a grandson, three years old, tells his grandfather who is preaching, "Granddaddy, that will be about enough," what can Granddaddy do but stop the sermon? Or take the dilemma of Raybon, the family's Don Juan. On his fifth birthday, he wailed, "I'm five today! I'm getting so old; but I don't want to get married and I don't want to be an old bachelor. So what can I do?" His problems were just beginning, by the time he had reached fourteen, he was dating and receiving the rod with every date. "Finally in desperation his Papa asked, 'Son, why do you deliberately disobey me?' 'Well, Papa,' Raybon replied, 'I thought it over and decided that I'd rather take the punishment than miss seeing the girls.'"

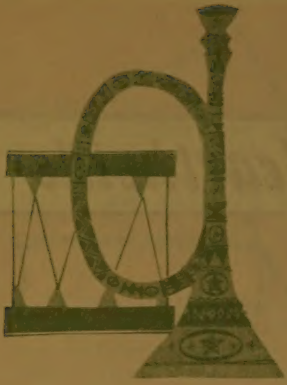
These are just a few examples of the light side in store for the readers of the book. Everyone should have the privilege of relaxing with this warm, lovingly told account of the Porter family.

### Devotional Books

Recognizing our busy days, the author, J. Clyde Wheeler, has compiled a book of meditations for the "read as you run" user. The book will provide a new approach toward dealing with special problems and hard work. The resources of religion and a sense of humor are included for daily living. Inspirational nuggets for everyday problems of temper, gossip, weariness, off center, criticism, and others are found in **Light for Dark Days** (The Bethany Press, St. Louis, 1961, 128 pages, \$1.95).

For the layman, laywoman, or professional religious leader who leads prayers in group worship, an excellent source for ideas and inspiration is the little book **Prayers for Christian Services** by Carl A. Glover (Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1959, 176 pages including index to titles, subjects, and number of prayer, \$2.25). Among the subjects and events for which the prayers are arranged are: Prayer with the Choir Before Service; Invocation; the Collect; Thanksgiving; Penitence and Confession.





## A Guest Editorial

### The Man in the Modern Family

Men and women differ, literally, in every cell in their bodies. In large and important areas of life, they have different standards of value. In any situation, they will tend to behave differently, merely because they are male and female, respectively. They are not equal—no two things in Nature are equal. (Equality is merely a metaphysical concept.) They are equivalent—of equal value, each in his own way. It is as unrealistic to speak of inferiority and superiority in this connection as to speak of equality. The sexes are complementary; they are mutually dependent; they fulfill themselves completely only in association with each other.

What is the role of the man in the modern family? Obviously, he is to be a partner in a co-operative enterprise. One partner may be dominant, according to the balance of personality traits, but marriages in which the wife is the undisputed boss amount to only about one-fourth of the total, and are only half as likely to be happy as are those in which husband and wife have a fairly equal distribution of rights, duties, responsibilities, and privileges. These 50-50 marriages are half again as happy as those in which the husband is definitely the dominant partner.

The man's role, then, should today be regarded as that of a real partner, based on natural differences and a division of labor in the enterprise. This does not mean that he should not assist his wife in many of her tasks, but if this is carried too far, the children may feel that they have no father—merely a mother and an assistant mother. Such an outcome does not represent efficiency in the organization of the home, because it does not provide for the utmost utilization of the dif-

ferences in natural resources between husband and wife; and worst of all, it leaves the children confused as to the roles of men and women in the world, with resultant failure on their part to develop normally and live successfully as adults.

All evidence points to the need which both boys and girls feel for a father whom they can admire as an individual in his own right, and who has something to contribute to them that they can find nowhere else. Let me suggest some of the ways in which father can fill this role, more fully and effectively.

1. He must understand his children better. It is just as important to teach "child development" to boys as to girls, but at present virtually all such teaching is given to the latter. The result is failure of the two sexes to agree on management of their children—largely because they have different backgrounds of knowledge on the subject.

Some recent studies have found that conflict on this topic is even more frequent than conflict over the handling of finances—and it is much more destructive to the home. The more education given to women on this point the more harmful the consequences—unless men are also educated! Surveys made of nursery schools in which mothers are required to participate personally, thereby improving their understanding of how to handle children, found the result at the end of the year was greater disharmony in the home, not less, because the gap between father's and mother's points of view was greater than before. There is great need for classes for older boys and men, in which they will learn about child guidance from strong and experienced men whom they admire and respect.

2. He must learn now to co-operate with his wife more effectively in all other phases of marriage and family life. The sexes are too often brought up to compete against each other, rather than to co-operate.

3. He must learn how to maintain proper and adequate discipline of the children, based on wisdom

rather than merely on power. In the ordinary home most of the discipline is handled by the mother, and the father must, of course, back her up. In addition he must make a contribution to the development of the acceptance of responsibility, which is the essence of the discipline we want children to have—not merely conformity to the demands of authority.

4. He must bring into the home and into the lives of the children, something different from the mother's contribution—otherwise the children's outlook on life is unduly narrow and their growth is correspondingly restricted. Their father can bring to them the outside world, and he can take them out into it. Too often, he is satisfied to take them into the world of play—to a ball game or on a fishing trip. This is excellent, but it is even better for him to take boys and girls alike to his place of work, so they can learn something about the way the world is run. He should continually create opportunities to have them in real-life situations.

5. He can, with his wife, see to it that the children themselves do a fair share of the work of the world—in the first instance—the little world represented by their own home. Teamwork organized in a family council is an invaluable education, if it is based on leadership of the parents rather than slave-driving, and if it turns the youngsters into real partners who feel that it is their home and will be a better home because they make it so.

With such training there would be a resultant increase in the number of men of the kind particularly needed today—men who can be leaders of their own families and at the same time partners with their wives; men who can provide such patterns for their children that the girls will grow up knowing what a good man is like and wanting to marry no other kind; boys who will grow up wanting to be like father and who, if they are like father, will be good citizens in every respect.

—Paul Popenoe



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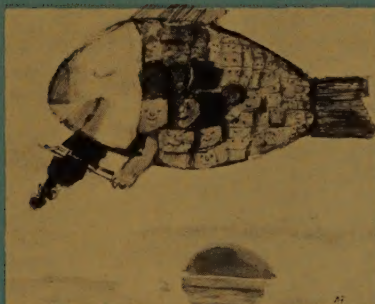
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